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# MEMOIRS

OF

# MRS. ANGELINE B. SEARS,

WITH EXTRACTS

## FROM HER CORRESPONDENCE.

BY

MRS. MELINDA HAMLINE.

"The name of Jesus is worth a universe."—Page 250.

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# PREFACE.

In preparing the following Memoir, the writer does not forget that the world is filled with books—that copious supplies of thought and sentiment, of fact and fiction, are flowing from the press. Nor is it overlooked, that satiety may render even useful books insipid, so that the full soul shall turn away from them to its own musings, and seek to draw from nature the lessons which it can no longer endure to take second-hand from the copyist. Yet the press will continue to be employed, and novelists will do their part to keep it busy. And shall no more sober books be written? Is there no hope that truth may yet supplant error, and living realities, rather than wild, and even profane fictions, come to be used for edification and entertainment? Shall mere tales continue to engross the public taste, and be studied as the means of instruction in virtue, and even in *religion?* Must admirable characters and *examples of piety* come before us

the mere creations of fancy; and Truth stand aside, that Fable may teach wisdom and train mankind to goodness?

The object of this little volume is truthfully to exhibit character under the control of divine grace; to hold up before the Christian public, in unexaggerated light, a sinner saved "to the uttermost;" and, as far as may be, to trace the process by which she was brought to that maturity of the Christian life which secured so glorious a victory in death; for the object of Christian biography should be, not to palliate the faults of human nature, but to exemplify that grace of God which, received by faith, subdues and reigns gloriously over them—to illustrate how omnipotent grace can

> "Into a saint exalt a worm—
> A worm exalt to God."

We shall strive to keep this in view, while we attempt to sketch the character of her, who, could she speak from heaven, would say, "Be sure not to exalt *me*, but the *grace of God*. Show the world that I am '*a sinner saved by grace.*'"

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# MEMOIRS

OF

# MRS. ANGELINE B. SEARS.

## CHAPTER I.

**Early life—Characteristics—Diary—Sketch from memory—Acknowledgment of Divine goodness—Special providences—Brother drowned—Parents converted—Her mother.**

Mrs. Angeline B. Sears, wife of Rev. C. W. Sears, of the Ohio conference, and daughter of Moses Brooks, Esq., of Cincinnati, O., was born September 20, 1817. Her early childhood was characterized by uncommon vivacity and quickness of perception, and by an unvarying love of truth. Her father testifies, that he "never knew her to equivocate, or give the least false coloring, to excuse herself or criminate others;" and that, "whenever her young associates differed respecting any fact with which she was acquainted, an appeal to her would always elicit the exact truth."

This portion of her life was marked by several peculiar interpositions of Providence;

a few of which she refers to in her diary. It is, however, much to be regretted that she has not preserved a more minute account of her early history. It appears that she several times began to record the dealings of her heavenly Father, and, for a short period, kept a diary; but her humble views of herself prevented her continuing it, and, in a season of mental depression, she destroyed most of what she had written.

A little less than one year before her death, at the earnest solicitation of her husband, she wrote a brief sketch from memory, in a blank book, which he had procured for that purpose.

On the first leaf of this book we find the following entry:

"ANGELINE B. SEARS.

"From my dear husband, with the request that I use its pages to record the work of the Lord in my poor heart. February 4, 1848."

On the second leaf is found the following text: "Many, O Lord my God, are thy wonderful works which thou hast done, and thy thoughts which are to us-ward: they cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee: if I would declare and speak of them, they are *more than can be numbered*," Psalm xl, 5.

The diary is preceded by an invocation, and a general acknowledgment of the divine mercy and care, expressed in language which all who intimately knew her will recognize as in unison with her governing train of thought: "Holy Spirit, bring to my remembrance thy gracious dealings with my unworthy soul from my infancy, and help me faithfully to record them here, to the praise of thy unmerited grace!

"From infant days I have been the child of providence—I may say of a peculiar providence—and from my eighth year a child of many prayers: in view of which, at the outset of my record, I thankfully adopt the beautiful lines of the venerable Charles Wesley:

'God of my life, whose gracious power,
Through various deaths my soul hath led,
Or turn'd aside the fatal hour,
Or lifted up my sinking head!

In all my ways thy hand I own,
Thy ruling providence I see:
Assist me still my course to run,
And still direct my paths to thee.'

"I would bring to remembrance, that my heavenly Father guards, with peculiar care and love, the smallest of his creatures, as seen by the exercise of his paternal guardianship over me in childhood, in delivering my

life, in imminent peril. When but a few months old, my nurse let me fall into a cellar, where much rubbish and a great number of corks were lying. My head was so bruised with a cork, that an impress was left in it as deep, or nearly so, as half its diameter. Medical aid was resorted to, which, by the blessing of Providence, saved me from great suffering and death.

"When about five or six years old, I was one evening led by older companions to the river, on the bank of which my parents lived. We went out on a raft, at the water's edge, on which I found a tin cup. In trying to dip some water with it out of the stream, I fell in, and should have been drowned, but for my heavenly Father's care, who ordered that in throwing up my hands, when sinking and screaming for help, they struck a log, by which I was enabled to hold fast, until my playmates came to my assistance.

"Some years after, I was one day exercising on horseback, through a short lane, at the end of which stood a small stable, having a very low loft, not much higher than the horse's back. I was unused to equestrian exercises, and exceedingly unskillful in guiding my horse.

When passing by the open door, he turned, and, in spite of my efforts to prevent, was about walking under the loft to a trough, which would have crushed me to death between his back and the timbers above. A friend was near, who had been looking at me, but whose back was at the moment turned. As I screamed in affright, he ran to my aid, and succeeded in seizing the bridle of my horse, just in time to deliver me from my danger.

"In later years, when convicted by the Holy Spirit, while the burden of sin was heavy upon me, and my dark soul ignorant of the means of relief, I frequently lamented that my life had been preserved through these dangers, as most of them occurred before I had reached, as I supposed, the years of accountability. But He whose ways are not as our ways, chose to preserve me, and guide me by his grace and Spirit, and show me that the end of my being is to glorify him, and to exalt his name.

"A peculiar providence was also used as the means of the conversion of my parents, about my eighth year; namely, the loss of an interesting little son, remarkable for sprightliness

of mind and a noble generosity of soul. He was drowned in the Ohio river, in his sixth year—a severe dispensation, but which the Lord used to bring my parents to a knowledge of their condition as sinners, and lead them to himself. Soon after this they both became members of the Methodist Episcopal Church—a Church against which my mother had entertained great prejudice, having always esteemed them a disorderly, fanatical people. But with her conversion the Lord stripped her of her prejudice, and she became an active, zealous, faithful member, entertaining a warm love for the humblest of his children, and abounding in faith and good works, until her triumphant entry into the everlasting 'city of her God.'

"My mother!—truly, she was rightly named when she was called a '*Christian,*' for she was *like Christ*—like him, was characterized by a meek, patient, quiet spirit. Under all circumstances, perplexities, and afflictions, she was enabled by grace to say, 'Not my will but *thine* be done.' Like him she '*went about doing good.*' For every tale of sorrow she had an ear, and for the weary relief. The sick and the poor engrossed her special sympathy, when not attending to the claims of

her family. Furthermore, her secret chamber was the sanctuary where the Lord revealed the most of the glory of his presence to her soul.

"One or two incidents, which made a deep impression on my young heart, I distinctly remember. One night, about eleven o'clock, the family were aroused by the low but rapturous shouts of my mother, as she passed from one apartment to another, uttering the praises of *her Savior*. She had remained up, after my father and other members of the family had retired, for purposes of devotion. In reading and prayer she was so baptized with the Spirit, that she could not forbear sounding aloud the love of Jesus. After this it was not uncommon for her to be so visited and filled with his love, that when she came from her closet, her countenance seemed illuminated as though a radiance were transferred from the face of Christ to her own, and her lips sounded forth his praise.

"During her decline, her mind was kept in perfect peace, stayed upon the Lord—feeding in silence upon the bread of life. About one hour before her death, when the family and friends saw that her departure was nigh, and

were gathering around her bed, she exclaimed, 'O praise the Lord! Why do you not *all praise him!* O why do you not all praise the Lord!' seeming surprised at the silence of those around her. She continued to praise till her strength failed, and her voice grew feeble. She then raised her hands, moistened already with the cold sweat of death, and clasped them in token of triumph. But words cannot describe the scene. Her countenance beamed with unearthly radiance as floods of light from the Sun of righteousness poured into her soul to light her across the vale of death. To her the king of terrors had lost his sting, the grave its gloom. She died May 5th, 1833."

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## CHAPTER II.

**First convictions—Presbyterian camp meeting—Labors of a friend—Goes to the anxious seat—Methodist camp meeting—Convictions deepened—Joins the Church as a seeker—Temptations at school—Vacillations—Cholera—Domestic responsibilities.**

In noting the providences that marked her childhood, Mrs. Sears seems to have been particularly arrested by that which led to the conversion of her family; and, caught away by the remembrance of the pious life and trium-

phant death of her mother, she intermits her own history, to sketch hers. Had her mother lived, we should, doubtless, have been able to gather many interesting incidents of the daughter's childhood, which none, of course, but a mother could furnish. The diary records, as follows, her early religious impressions:

"I do not know at what period I first felt the influence of the Holy Spirit. I know I was blessed with a tender conscience from my earliest years, which was severely pained whenever it was violated, and could not be appeased until the violation was confessed and the occasion removed. I remember to have thought much about heaven at the time my little brother was drowned, and to have had a strong persuasion that he was taken thither; and I remember to have tried to console my deeply-afflicted mother with the thought.

"I think my first conviction, as a sinner, of my need of a Savior, was about my thirteenth year, through the conversation of a young lady of the *'Old School' Presbyterian Church.* That denomination held a *camp meeting* near Lane Seminary, which this friend invited me to attend. My parents consenting, I did so. During the progress of the meeting my friend frequently

walked in the woods with me, for the purpose of conversing about my soul. I recollect that, in endeavoring to show me the necessity of coming out from the world, and acknowledging Christ, she quoted the following passage, which made a deep impression on my mind: 'Whosoever, therefore, shall be ashamed of me and of my words, in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels,' Mark viii, 38. I went once to the '*anxious seat*,' or what Methodists term 'the mourner's bench,' but without any special realization of the importance of the act. I left the camp meeting in a serious state of mind, with no adequate convictions, however, of my true condition as a condemned sinner."

The young lady above referred to, in the language of Mrs. Sears' diary, "is now (1848) a Methodist, and has been several years married to a lawyer of Illinois, who is also a member of the same Church. Her brother, Dr. J. F——y, once our family physician, and a rigid Calvinist, has since become a Methodist minister." Should this narrative meet her eye, how must her heart rejoice to learn the happy issue of the religious concern which she was instrumental in awaken-

ing! Probably Mrs. Sears never wholly lost the convictions she received at the camp meeting; and the impressions thus early made on her mind, by the recital of that solemn text, may have given tone to her whole religious character. All who knew her must have observed how carefully, in her maturer years, she carried out its principles. In language, dress, deportment, indeed, in all her ways, she aimed to acknowledge her Savior, whatever might be her personal perplexities or enjoyments.

"In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thy hand," is the direction of Him who cannot err—a direction, which, were it obeyed by all professed followers of Christ, would be productive of abundant fruit to his glory. Who would not cheerfully endure the cross of introducing the subject of religion in conversation, and urging its importance on others, if assured that the humble effort would result in the salvation of a soul? But "we know not whether shall prosper either this or that," and should be content to perform our duty, and leave results to God. The Bible teaches us to be "always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as we know that our labor is not in vain in the Lord." This should

inspire our zeal, and encourage us to persevere in efforts to save souls, even when circumstances appear unfavorable. A text from the Bible affectionately urged on the dullest ear, may continue to sound on that ear till it gets a hearing—or lodged in the heart, and long buried there, by the power of the Holy Ghost, it may become "spirit and life;" and in it, "the dead" soul may "hear the voice of the Son of God and live." Reader, wouldst thou pluck souls as brands from the burning? Then let every thing that proceedeth out of thy mouth be "good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace to the hearers." Thus did the youthful but faithful Miss F——y; and the history before us proves that she did not toil for naught.

Continuing her narrative, Mrs. Sears says: "These were my school days; and on returning to my school duties, I suffered much ridicule from my thoughtless irreligious mates who were at the camp meeting, and knew that I had presented myself at the despised anxious seat. About two months after, the Methodist camp meeting commenced, which my parents favored my attending, and placed me under the care of an old lady, a zealous member of that Church. Here conviction was renewed, and, I think, some-

what deepened. Through the advice of friends, I placed myself among the seekers of salvation, and as such gave my name to the Church, I think, August 3, 1830.

"I attended the means of grace, especially preaching, class and prayer meetings, and at times was diligent in reading the Bible, and in secret prayer. Sometimes my heart would be very much broken up—tears would flow freely; and occasionally a gleam of comfort, I knew not of what kind, or wherefore, would possess my heart—perhaps I should rather say my *mind*. But all these impressions were like the morning cloud and early dew. They passed away with every change of influence and circumstance. My school associations were very unfavorable to the culture of religious feeling. I think not one of my age in the school I attended was pious, and but few of them had pious parents; though most of them were moral, church-going people. Then the ambitious emulations cultivated by teachers in the hearts of their pupils, exerted an influence unfriendly to religion. The love of dress and worldly associations was also in me, as in most young persons, very strong—which the Bible, and my mother, and my nursing mothers in Israel, all

told me was incompatible with the love of God. So I passed along with a gay heart, or a hard heart, or a broken and somewhat contrite heart, just as surrounding influences conspired to affect it.

"I always entertained great reverence for the ministers of the Gospel, and delighted to oblige them when in my power, from the first whom I remember to have visited my father's house, soon after my parents joined the Church—the Rev. Wm. B. Christie, and Rev. James Callahan: both now before the throne. They were appointed to my father's to lodge during the session of the Ohio conference. I remembered them both ever after with great esteem, and looked upon the chamber they occupied as sacred. The Church bore with me, and retained me, advising and reproving as they saw need.

"In 1832, when the cholera scourged our land and our city, conscious that I was without hope in Christ, I became exceedingly alarmed, particularly when news of the death of any of my acquaintances would reach me. At such times I would resort to my room, and read the ninety-first Psalm, and then pour out my fears to Him who heareth in secret; and though I was an unregenerate sinner, I believe in every instance,

when I thus prayed, my fears were allayed, and I felt a degree of confidence that my prayer was heard. Myself and my family were preserved from the destroyer. He was not permitted to come nigh our dwelling."

After entering her fourteenth year, in consequence of the sickness and death of her mother, Mrs. Sears was taken from school, and assumed the care of her father's house and her younger sisters; and she seemed to possess energy suited to the weighty responsibilities of her station, "the duties of which," says her father, "she discharged with self-sacrificing devotion, and with judgment above her years." She patiently confined herself to domestic affairs till her health failed; and so uncomplainingly did she proceed, that her father, engrossed as he was with business, did not discover her danger till she was on the borders of a decline. He says of her at that period: "She did not, at this time, profess to have received remission of her sins; yet her whole manner was changed from thoughtless gayety to the sober contemplation of present duty and future usefulness, and the everlasting welfare of herself and others. By nature her temper was hasty and irritable; yet she was under the influence of

restraining grace. The Sun of righteousness had cast his beams into her soul, and given her an enlightened conscience and a quick perception of duty. Her reading had ever been, from choice, of the more profitable kind. She read but one novel, I believe, in her whole life; and the light trash of the day had no fascination for her."

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## CHAPTER III.

**Her father's second marriage—Her step-mother—Letter—Goes to Philadelphia—Letter from her father—Her school—Death of her sister—Return home—World ensnares her—Church membership—Its salutary influence—Conversation on Church membership.**

To Mrs. Sears her father's second marriage, in 1834, was a test of principle. She had imbibed, in a high degree, the prejudice so common against step-mothers. The lady who took the place of her own beloved mother was a stranger to her; but she felt the duty of sacrificing her own feelings and prejudices for the happiness of the family, and she resolved to do it. She received her new mother with open arms, and, after a short acquaintance, with open *heart*, using every endeavor to render her responsible position pleasant; justly rep-

resenting her among friends as possessing all those excellences which fitted her to supply the place of the departed. She became her step-mother's most affectionate counselor and devoted friend, as will be seen in the following letter from Mrs. Brooks:

"I married and came into the family in 1834. At my first interview with Angeline, I was much pleased. I found her to be exceedingly modest and retiring in disposition, uniting in her person a degree of sprightliness and beauty which I had seldom met with. She possessed also a maturity of judgment far above her years. In disposition I never saw her equal—so benevolent, so full of sympathy, so kind to all. I found her such a counselor, in the management of my family, as I felt the greatest need of. I know not how I should have got along without her advice. Her prejudice with regard to *step-mothers* was strong; and, as the eldest of the family, she might have rendered my position extremely unpleasant; but, casting aside all personal feelings of this kind, she endeavored to impress the younger members of the family with correct ideas in regard to their duty as children, and exerted all her influence, which was of course

great, in promoting the highest union and love in the family.

"Although a member of the Church, she did not profess religion; but, from her deportment, and strict attention to religious duties, I regarded her as a pattern of piety. In the spring of 1835 she went to Philadelphia, to attend school. While there, her amiable disposition and deportment secured much friendship and love."

The following is her father's testimony respecting this event and its results:

"Soon after she was released from the cares of my family by my second marriage, I sent her to a celebrated school in Philadelphia, where she mingled with the gay and the giddy, without seeming to imbibe the follies that too often result in greater injury than all the information derived from such boarding schools is worth. And when she had finished her education, as the phrase is, she had really but just commenced it. She continued to devote all the time she could spare to the acquisition of useful knowledge, acting on the principle, that where knowledge is a duty ignorance is a crime."

Of her residence in Philadelphia, and the

influence exerted on her by the school, *she* has left the following record:

"Here every influence inclined us *far, far* from Christ and his atonement. Prayers were repeated morning and evening from the Prayer-Book, by the governess, she and all the scholars sitting in their chairs, in a prescribed posture, namely, erect, hands crossed on the lap, and feet placed together, with the toes a little diverging. These rules were to be scrupulously observed. After each young lady was seated, the principal, or governess, glanced round the circle to see that every pupil's position was according to rule. But, alas! nothing was said about the solemnity or importance of the worship. While we engaged in the form, or *a form*, the spirit and the truth of worship were forgotten.

"While in this institution, our studies were of the first importance. After school-hours were over, amusements—such as vocal and instrumental music, dancing, novel-reading, chit-chat about fashion and etiquette, or a promenade, in company with the governess, in a fashionable public square—filled up, or rather consumed the remaining precious hours of the day. Dancing I never engaged in; for, though

my heart was very far from God, reverence for my parents, especially my departed mother, and for the Church—a certificate of membership in which I still held—forbade my partaking of that amusement; which, with a few other items of conscientiousness—such as reading my Bible, refusing to read novels, or to walk in the garden or swing on the Sabbath—gained me the appellation, 'the pious.' The last two were great temptations, after Mrs. S—— moved to her country-seat, at Hamilton village. But these were abandoned by several of the young ladies after I left, and, I was informed, through my example; and some of them even resolved to read the Bible instead of novels, at least on the Sabbath.

"Such were the influences with which I was surrounded. I attended Church, with the others, once on Sabbath, listened to a sermon, read without any of the unction of the Holy Ghost attending it, and which made no impression on the heart or mind, except as occasionally some beauty of language would arrest the attention. I was in a Methodist church but once while in Philadelphia, having no one to attend with me. There were several daughters of Methodist parents at the school,

but they preferred attending with the majority, and, being a stranger, I disliked to go to a strange Church alone; consequently, the certificate alluded to was never presented to a pastor there."

The following autumn she was called home by the sickness and death of Mrs. Sullivan, her eldest sister. And now the influence of her worldly associations began to be seen, in a display of the tendencies of the natural heart—of that "carnal mind which is enmity against God"—which "is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." While the propriety of her deportment was such, that her mother—not then an experimental Christian—"thought her a pattern of piety," her heart was borne away by the love of fashion and pleasure, and her whole being tended from God and holiness. Of this portion of her history the letter from her mother, before quoted, says:

"Upon her return from school, the benevolence of her heart prompted her to visit the haunts of the poor, and, as far as was in her power, to alleviate their sufferings, supply their wants, and administer consolation to them. So completely did she, at times, lose sight of her-

self, as to injure her own health in attempting to minister to others. Her friendship was truly disinterested, and, of course, lasting. She frequently neglected herself, but always anticipated my wants in sickness and health. When she was indisposed, I never knew her to complain of her suffering. I often discovered, from some involuntary motion, that she was in pain; but when inquired of as to the cause, she would almost invariably reply, 'O, it is nothing of consequence.'"

She appeared, through her whole life, to think herself unworthy of any enjoyment; so low were her views of herself, that she seemed almost to be gratified by suffering as suited to her demerit. Yet these views of her unworthiness did not banish her pride, worldliness, or gayety; which shows the inefficacy of penance, and the inconsistency of poor human nature. But we will permit her again to speak for herself; for we presume that—allowing for the severity of her self-judging—her own language will best illustrate her character. After stating that she was called home on account of the death of her sister, and that she arrived too late to witness the triumphs of that scene, she says:

"But affliction and bereavement did not bring me effectually to God. On my return home, friends and the world gathered around me. I was now looked upon as a young lady just taking her place in society; and, after the wound of my bereavement was healed over by time, the world began to wear new charms. For a short period the sanctuary was nearly forsaken, except as I occasionally went to one where much of worldly influence and fashion was concentrated. Where the poor followers of Christ worshiped there were no charms for me. I should probably have been committed to the world as its votary, but for the advice and influence of my father, who desired me to return my certificate to the Methodist Episcopal Church. As he several times expressed his anxiety on this point, I determined to offer it to my former class-leader, though my heart was wholly averse to it. I felt the inconsistency of being attached to a Church, while all my tastes and desires led me in an opposite direction—of professing to leave the vain pomp and glory of the world, while I was pursuing it with all my heart. I would not have chosen to *withdraw* from the Church; but as I was, by

virtue of my removal with certificate, already, as I supposed, honorably *out*, my tastes and feelings being as they were, I thought it were better to remain so. But, yielding to my father's wish, I returned my letter of membership to my leader, and again attended his class.

"This was, in one respect, a salutary step. Though I am ashamed of my inconsistency, I am thankful that the Church received and bore with me. I was much in the world, and was, in every sense, worldly-minded; yet I was frequently brought under religious influences—conscience was roused—the Spirit of God operated, and my pleasures were often embittered. At this period I proved that

> 'Each pleasure hath its poison too,
> And every sweet a snare.'

The gay party, the concert, the fair, could none of them afford me entertainment that would silence the thunders of the law as the Spirit would utter them in the hours of retirement. But morning after morning broke, and with the bright rays of the sun and the influences of society, conviction was stifled. Thus I went on, almost entirely disregarding the calls of the Holy Spirit, for two years."

How many will here read their own experi-

ence! How many do thus lose their Church membership! How many lose their *souls*, as Mrs. Sears, perhaps, would have done but for the fidelity of her father, and her filial obedience! Happy for the young who have faithful parents and obedient tempers. Happy those whose sense of propriety, if no higher motive, leads them, when in the Church, to observe its ordinances. Such will find, as she did, that it is better to attend the means of grace, even with slothful affections, than not to attend them at all—that it is better to adhere to the Church, though under a heavy cross and with dull hearts, than to throw off its restraints, and recklessly plunge away to the world; thus, not only resisting and grieving, but *quenching* the Holy Spirit.

I am aware that the question is often raised, "Should unconverted persons be permitted to join the Church?" They should not, if the Bible, either directly or by strict implication, forbids. But where, and in what form do we find the prohibition? We will not say there is none; but less we cannot say than that we never have found it. If it exist, many Churches act in violation of it. By some, the Methodists only are supposed to be involved. But this is an

error; the whole family of Pædobaptists, of every school, is chargeable in this matter as well as Methodism, with a mere circumstantial variation. The following conversation occurred in my presence, a few years since, between two gentlemen of different denominations:

*A.* "I am surprised, sir, that your denomination should admit unregenerate persons to Church membership."

*B.* "Do you not approve of the practice, then?"

*A.* "By no means. I consider it antiscriptural, and a great injury to the cause of religion."

*B.* "Why, then, does your Church practice it?"

*A.* "*Ours* practice it! I never heard of such a thing. Never did a case of the kind occur, I suppose, on the continent."

*B.* "How, then, do you receive members into your Church?"

*A.* "We examine them in regard to their experience, and never admit them until, in the judgment of charity, they are truly converted."

*B.* "But is that 'judgment of charity' infallible, or is it liable to err?"

*A.* "Liable to err, of course; but, then, we

*intend* to guard the Church, and for this end do *our* duty, which is all that God requires. It seems to me that your Church willingly breaks down the guards and defenses of the sacred inclosure."

*B.* "But do you admit *no* persons into the Church without a profession of regeneration?"

*A.* "Not one. We should deem it a profane act."

*B.* "You say you examine them. That, I suppose, is not taking them into the Church, but is simply a preparation for their admission?"

*A.* "They next enter into covenant with the Church, and then are announced as members, and received to the sacrament."

*B.* "What sacrament?"

*A.* "The Lord's supper."

*B.* "Not without baptism, I suppose?"

*A.* "If they have not been baptized, of course they *must* be before they sit at the Lord's table."

*B.* "In such a case you consider baptism the Scriptural mode of initiating them into the Church?"

*A.* "Certainly."

*B.* "And those baptized are, by that sacrament, made members of the Church, are they not?"

*A.* "So I conceive."

*B.* "Now I will inquire whether those baptized *infants*, which are brought by thousands into your Church, profess regeneration?"

*A.* "I do not consider *them* members of the Church."

*B.* "But you have granted that baptism initiates into the Church. Besides, do you not yield to the opinions of your own standard writers—of such masters in divinity as Dr. Dwight?"

Here the conversation was willingly, or unwillingly waved. But the worthy objector was evidently taken by surprise. He was aware that the ablest writers of his Church insist that by baptism the child becomes a member, and that solemn parental covenants look to that great fact. And, although he might plead that the child is a member only in a *qualified sense*, yet, certainly, it is not in a sense more Scripturally qualified, than the case of a catechumen or probationer in the Methodist Episcopal Church. But we drop the theme, merely adding that Mrs. Sears is one example among thousands, of the benefits of Church membership as a *means of seeking God*.

## CHAPTER IV.

New acquaintances—Deeper convictions—Visit to a friend—Hester Ann Rogers—Conversion—Change in deportment—Her mother's letter—Choice of friends—Benevolence—Reading—Conflicts—Perseverance in duty—An invalid.

The narrative of Mrs. Sears proceeds thus: "I began to be more interested in the means of grace in our own Church—I scarcely knew why—and to attend public worship more constantly. I met some interesting acquaintances, with whom I formed permanent friendships. Among them were my dear friend, Mrs. H——, whom I had slightly known as Mrs. T——, and, some time after, the family of Dr. R——, who was then stationed at Wesley Chapel. With his daughter, now Mrs. Rev. C—— B——, I formed a very pleasant acquaintance.

"The Holy Spirit seemed now to be loosening my hold of the world, and convincing me of superior joys. I became deeply convicted of my state as an unregenerate sinner, with no hope in Christ, or share in his atoning blood. I had no *vivid* views of my awful danger and exposure to hell. A deep, desolate sense of my *alienation from God* seemed to be my prominent feeling. The world lost its alluring aspect,

and its pleasures palled. At times my sense of desolation, as an alien from God, was so great, that tears would gush from my eyes as I walked along the street; and raising them upward, I would exclaim, *'An alien from God! an alien from God! an alien from God!'*

"As I did not make any record of my experience, I forget the order of much that transpired within and without. But, about this time, I recollect calling on Mrs. H——, whom I had not then been in the habit of visiting. She made many inquiries as to my religious state; and finding I had an anxious mind, she directed me to such books as she thought would instruct me in the way *to life*, and loaned me the memoir of Hester Ann Rogers, which was the first work of the kind I ever read. She also reminded me of the necessity of nonconformity to the world *in dress, in spirit, and in associations.*

"In the state of mind above described, I attended the services of the sanctuary three times on Sabbath, January 7, 1837. In the evening I went to the 'Old Brick,' Fourth street. Rev. L. L. H—— preached from Psalm xci, commencing, 'He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High.' His remarks on the clause, 'In Him will I trust,' setting forth that the in-

carnate God was the *sinner's only refuge*, gave me much comfort; yet my burden was not removed. I retired, trying to say in my heart, '*In Him will I trust*,' and fell asleep trying. I awoke long before day; but, though darkness was without, all was light, and joy, and peace within. I arose with a glad heart, went down to the parlor fire, and spent the morning in reading my *new* Bible, and singing *new* hymns, such as describe the pardoned sinner.

"When the day broke, all the world looked bright and beautiful—though clad in a vestment of snow—a fit emblem, as I thought, of the new creation I had experienced—bright, and glorious, and pure. Truly, 'old things had *passed away*, and behold all things had become new.' When the family came into the parlor, my father, who was very unwell, remarked, 'I am too sick to pray.' My heart and lips exclaimed, 'I feel as if I could pray;' and then, with tears streaming down my face, I related to the family the exercises which I had passed through for some time, and the joy and peace I then felt, and added, '*You may think it* delusion, but I know it is not.' My mother said not a word; but has since told me that she then considered it the height of enthusiasm. Pa requested me to read,

which I did, the one hundredth Psalm; and every sentence spoke power to my heart. He then prayed. He was taken ill that morning, and for six weeks his life was nearly despaired of. The Lord sustained me in a wonderful manner; and, praised be his name! he spared the life of my father."

In connection with the above, it may properly be mentioned, that her mother had been educated with strong prejudices against the Methodist Episcopal Church, and was not, at the time, an experienced Christian; but, not long after, she sought and obtained the knowledge of sins forgiven, and was prepared to join hands with her daughter in the work of the Lord. How joyfully, and with one heart, have they since journeyed together in the "more excellent way!"

From this period there was a decided change in her manner of life. Her duties were performed with greater zeal and fidelity, and many things were regarded as sacredly binding upon her which had before been overlooked, or esteemed as unimportant. In the letter to which reference has been made, her mother remarks:

"This change produced great results; and from this time she sought to promote the

honor and glory of God in all she did. As a Bible-class teacher she was the means of benefiting all who attended. She was very active as Secretary of the Missionary Society, and, at the same time, exerted herself to the utmost as a Manager in the Benevolent Society, not only *distributing*, but *giving* alms, and endeavoring to awake the unawakened, pointing them to the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. Often have we since taken sweet counsel together—prayed, sung, and rejoiced in God our Savior; and when she was married the loss to me was great indeed."

The most pious were now her chosen companions. She selected the friends of the Savior as her friends, and, without regard to rank or opulence, seemed to say, "Whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother." The recorded experience of the faithful dead, with other devotional reading, especially the Bible, employed as much of her time as could be redeemed from other imperative duties.

She was much in secret prayer, being often found in her chamber kneeling, with her Bible

open before her. Her efforts to benefit others were redoubled. Her attire assumed a marked plainness, from which no solicitations could induce her to swerve. She sought, by economizing in her wardrobe, to extend her charities; and even when her parents placed in her hands money, with the request that she should purchase for herself new articles of clothing, she often appropriated it to the use of the indigent, observing that she did not need, and did not desire more than she already had. And when her mother, deeming that her comfort required additional purchases, made them for her, she would often repeat, "I did not wish any thing more than I had." She aimed to take the Bible as the rule of her life, and sought that holiness of heart which she found its pages inculcated.

After these statements, the reader will be likely to anticipate that her path was "as that of the just, which shineth more and more unto the perfect day." But it was not so. Instead of uninterrupted peace and progress, she became involved in deep perplexity and mental agony. Sorrow, not joy, became the prevailing state of her heart. Nor was this because it is a vain thing to serve the Lord,

nor because his ways are not equal. She placed before her the Gospel standard—"perfect love"—and aimed at it as her prize; but she forgot to employ the sword of the Spirit and the shield of faith. She attempted to lay aside every weight, and the sin which did so easily beset her, and to run with patience the race set before her, but did not *fix her eye* on Jesus. Here she failed. It was as though the suffering Israelite had turned his eye to the wound, instead of looking at the brazen serpent lifted up for his healing.

Another cause of embarrassment was, that she was wont to compare her own experience with that of the venerable Christian worthies of whom she read. Thus measuring herself, no wonder that she fell into great discouragement. The enemy of her peace took advantage of it, to accuse her, with great plausibility. Her natural tendency to self-reproach supplied him with a thousand inlets to her helpless soul, and she was often driven to the borders of despair. In this state almost every sin she had ever committed seemed magnified as an offense which could never be forgiven—which even the blood of Christ was insufficient to wash away.

At this period she was in the habit of calling on the writer almost daily, and spending hours in wrestling for the deliverance of her captive soul; sometimes in an agony almost more than life could support. But her Friend and Advocate above had his eye of pity on her, and at length brought her to triumph in his full salvation. She thus describes this portion of her religious history:

"I now began and continued to read all such books as tended to the knowledge of God, and to illustrate experience. The lives of Mr. Fletcher, Mrs. Fletcher, Mr. Wesley, Lady Maxwell, Carvosso, and some others, I perused with great interest and profit, but did not receive the full amount of benefit I might, because of my ignorance. The depth of their experience often discouraged me—not considering that they were fathers and mothers in Israel—I *but a babe;* and being ignorant of Satan's devices, I listened to his suggestions, when he would say, 'If you were a child of God you would experience all they did.'

"In all outward things I made an immediate and permanent separation from the world, as I thought the Bible directed. This proved a great trial to my family; and I would occa-

sionally hear an intimation, that plainness of dress and withdrawing from vain company were the effects of superstition. However, in this I was enabled steadfastly to maintain the stand I had taken, knowing what the word of God said on these points. Happy would it have been for me, had I as successfully wielded the sword of the Spirit and the shield of faith to ward off the thrusts of the devil. But I listened to his reasonings; and believing *him*, rather than the word of God, I was continually brought into darkness and condemnation.

"From the time of my conversion I was more or less convicted of the need of holiness, and that there was a state for the Christian higher than that in which he is placed by regeneration. Sinning and repenting make up the sum of life with many professing Christians. Alas! how few view it their privilege to live in any other than a state of *bondage;* for in such a state truly are all who fear God, yet have not the liberty of his children! The world, the deceitfulness of their own hearts, and the devil, hold them in captivity. So it was with me. I have often repeated Pollok's human heart but partially sanctified as a faithful picture of mine."

It will be recollected, that Mrs. Sears wrote the foregoing after she had come more clearly to apprehend faith in its simplicity and power, and she wondered—as thousands when delivered do—at her own dullness as a disciple of Christ—at her slowness "of heart to believe." One who had just entered the rest of faith was exclaiming, "O the simplicity of the way!" A friend said, "You could not perceive this when we tried to point it out." "No," she replied, "then your language was unmeaning to me; but now nothing is so expressive as the phrase, 'simple faith.'" Take the following illustration: two young ladies had, for a day or two, visited and supplied the wants of a poor old invalid, and had labored much to encourage him, as a convicted sinner, to throw himself on Christ for salvation. One morning, as they entered his apartment, he looked up, with a glad countenance, and said: "I were expecting you." "And why," said they, "were you expecting us?" "Because," said he, "you promised to return this morning." "And is it not wonderful, that you can believe *our* promise, poor, sinful mortals as we are, yet do not believe the promises of the unchangeable God, 'who cannot lie?'" The

snare was broken, and his stricken spirit at once received Christ and salvation by believing. Thus, by simple faith—by faith *alone*—must they who seek receive a heart "circumcised" to love God with a "*perfect love*"—must receive that promised happiness, that sprinkling which shall cleanse them from "*all* their filthiness, and from all their idols."

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## CHAPTER V.

**Letters—To Mrs. Rev. C. Brooks—To her sister Eliza—Remarks**

As the mind and heart are known by what they dictate, I present the following letters and extracts, selected from Mrs. Sears' correspondence, that the reader may, as it were, commune with one who, although her lips are now sealed, still speaks, and more impressively, because as from the grave. These letters indicate the variations in her experience, as one of them was written in a very joyful state of mind, and others under great discouragement and trial.

TO MRS. REV. C. BROOKS.

*Cincinnati, April* 16, 1839.

"Your note was handed me. my dear sister,

by your mother, on Sabbath; and though, in your haste, you were not very definite, yet I conclude from it, and some remarks of your ma's, that there is satisfaction all around. I have regretted very much having troubled your mind with it. But let us forget all now, for the more delightful theme—*a Savior's love.* I wished to have some minutes, at least, when I saw you last, that I might tell you with what fullness of love and mercy our precious Redeemer has dealt toward me lately. I say lately—not that *all* his acts have not been mercy and love, but that he has manifested both to me, by his own presence, in a higher sense than I have ever been permitted to feel before; and, since I saw you, his banner over me has been *love.* I can now look from *self*—*vile self*—to a bleeding Savior, and realize that his blood atones for my infinite unworthiness. O the wonders of redeeming love! May we learn more and more every day of the depth of its mysteries!

"My dear sister, I want your prayers. I am making a desperate—if I may use the word—struggle to disentangle myself from the world. I want every cord that binds me to earth to be cut loose. I do want to come out—with

Christian independence—from among them, be separate, as we are commanded, and, if it be necessary, for the sake of Christ, to become a reproach, or any thing, or nothing, so that I may win Him who, for my sake, suffered insult, poverty, and reproach. Ah! am I an heir of heaven, and traveling thitherward? And shall I be casting back a covetous eye on earth? Ah! dear M——, I know it must be all of grace, that I may be able to count all things but loss for the blessedness of possessing Christ alone; and I am glad that it *is* of grace; but I want you to pray, that I may be enabled to exercise such a degree of faith as may apprehend and use the grace proffered. O for a thankful heart for what I have already received! Though I have, for some days, felt much of my Savior's protecting love, yet I feel like a little child beginning to walk, that holds by its parent's finger in its attempts, yet with a consciousness of its liability to fall—not that the tender parent's finger will be withdrawn, but the child's own weakness or willfulness may prompt it to try alone. I know that my heavenly Father will not withdraw the finger of his love, and that none shall be able to pluck me out of his hand;

but I tremble lest I should let go my grasp and fall.

"Do you know the drudgery of making formal visits? If so, you know the heartless emptiness of the task I have been performing to-day. But I am thankful that my mind has been kept peaceful, instead of becoming dissipated, as is too often the case, when mingling with the world. I am led to behold its folly, and to pity those who live content with groveling pleasures. O that I could feel and pray more for them!

"Dear Mary, forgive the freedom with which I write; let charity cover all; and pray for

"Your unworthy sister,

"ANGELINE."

TO THE SAME.

"*Cincinnati, May* 8, 1839.

"DEAR SISTER,—I wish I could give you the eloquent, heart-searching sermon to which I have just listened; but that is impossible. I can, however, say, that to me the preacher portrayed my own poor, weak heart. The text was, 'Whosoever, therefore, shall be ashamed of me, and of my words, in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in

the glory of his Father with the holy angels.' Commencing with the ministry, and descending through every order of society, both Christian and infidel, he attempted to show each, in turn, what it is to be ashamed of Christ, and of his words, and that all are in danger, if not guilty, of this sin.

"And is it so? Ah! dear M——, my poor, corrupt heart, my daily walk and *conversation*, respond that with me it is so. I feel to-night that, of all, I the least deserve the name of Christian. My tender heavenly Father has stooped lately to bless me with a sense of his love; and though, for a little while, the flame of gratitude rose high in my soul, and I felt like telling all around me the preciousness of a Savior's love, yet, strange to tell, coldness and ingratitude continually get possession of all the affections of my soul. Why—why is it thus? Do you, my dear sister, ever find this to be your case? O the hardness—the fearfulness of my heart! What a picture does it present! Is it

> A Christian heart, awaked from sleep of sin,
> A temple of the Holy Ghost, and yet
> Oft lodging fiends; the dwelling-place of all
> The heavenly virtues—charity and truth,
> Humility, and holiness, and love;

And yet the common haunt of anger, pride,
Hatred, revenge . . . . .
Allied to heaven, yet parleying oft with hell;
A soldier listed in Messiah's band,
Yet giving quarter to Abaddon's troops;
With seraphs drinking from the well of life,
And yet carousing in the cup of death;
An heir of heaven, and walking thitherward,
Yet casting back a covetous eye on earth;
Emblem of strength and weakness; loving now,
And now *abhorring* sin; indulging now,
And now *repenting* sore; rejoicing now,
With joy unspeakable and full of glory;
Now weeping bitterly, and clothed in dust;
Half saint, and sinner half; half life, half death;
Commixture strange of heaven, earth, and hell?'

"Forgive this intrusion upon your patience, dear M——. I have felt emphatically the truth of these words; and whenever I have looked for a true picture of myself—as a Christian, too—this one has been sketched before me. But I fear it is too flattering; for I have reason to believe there is more of earth in me than heaven.

"My mother is very miserable; does not leave her room; is almost as helpless as a child. I feel anxious for her; but O how sweet it is to cast all our anxieties upon Him who careth for us! Pray for me, that I may be cleansed from *all* sin, and not be afraid

of the world, but live always a Christian. Remember me to brother B——. That his labors may be abundantly successful, and that his dear Mary may not forget that she has a work to do also, is the prayer of

"Your unworthy sister,

"ANGELINE."

TO THE SAME.

"*Cincinnati, Sept.* 9, 1839.

* * * "The dead here are reviving—the cold being warmed—the hitherto unbelieving are now strong in faith, and nearly all are rejoicing—*all but me.* My soul is dark, dark, and I know not whither to turn. It seems as though Satan had invented new and untried ways to tempt me. I am sometimes almost persuaded to give up all; and then the question arises—as though dictated by the Holy Spirit—but what can you gain? Where, poor soul, will you go for the words of eternal life? I have no power to act faith in my Savior; and yet I know that the sin of unbelief is the greatest of my sins. I am constantly reasoning with Satan and my own corrupt heart; and when I do thus, I despair. Sometimes I get courage enough to look up for a moment, and say, 'Lord, I believe; help thou my unbelief;' and then the

tempter comes in like a flood, with a multitude of objections, and, to convince me, points me to my own wicked heart; and so he sifts me continually. What—what can I do? The promises are only to those that ask in faith. I cannot, for I have none. I pray for it, but at the same time do not believe that I shall receive it. Thus I find even insincerity in my prayers.

"Now tell me, my dear sister, was you ever in such a state of darkness? And if so, how were you delivered? I am even tempted to stay from the ordinances of the Lord's house; but in this Satan has not succeeded. Sometimes it is suggested, that perhaps the doctrine of unconditional election is the true one, and that I am not of the elect. And I am sure, if that doctrine be indeed true, that I am not; for every bias of my soul is evil, and that continually. Satan understands all my weak points, and assails me at all.

"Your unworthy but affectionate

"ANGELINE."

TO THE SAME.

"*Portsmouth, Sept.* 7, 1840.

"I suppose you have more news from the camp meeting than I could tell you. As for my poor self, I cannot say that I enjoyed it

throughout; but at some of the prayer meetings my soul caught some few drops of the showers which fell all around me; and since, I have realized the *benefit* of the meeting more than while there. I suffered much distraction of mind, and could but seldom collect scattered thought and feeling in order to seek a blessing.

"I thank my God that, for a few days past, I have enjoyed much 'peace in believing;' and, though assaulted every hour by my great adversary—though I feel the weight of corrupt nature, yet my soul flies to its refuge, and I dare—though with trembling—to call the Savior mine. I think I am beginning to experience spiritual hunger and thirst. I have prayed for months that my desire may be enlarged; and I feel that the Lord has heard my cry. I hope that your path is shining brighter and brighter. My kind regards to brother B——. It is getting very dark; so must bid you good-night.

"Your unworthy but affectionate

"ANGELINE."

TO HER SISTER ELIZA.

"*Cincinnati, Aug.* 19, 1840.

"MY DEAR SISTER,—Pa received a paper from you this morning; and in compliance with your request, I hasten to write to you.

"I suppose it is as well that you have concluded to remain at Troy. I have felt much concern lest you should be thrown into unsuitable company in traveling. If you improve the time, it will, no doubt, be *better* that you stay. But you must not allow yourself to become home-sick in the least. We are all glad that you say you are happy.

"I have but this morning returned from our camp meeting, commenced a week from to-day. The encampment is about three miles beyond Lane Seminary. Near one hundred were born into the spiritual kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ, and they made the grove resound with the glad notes of salvation. O it is a quickening sight to behold thousands of people, who have souls to save, or be lost for ever, collected in the leafy grove, far from the vanity of the world, worshiping their God; and especially so when many of the number rejoice, knowing that the blood of Jesus, our Redeemer, can cleanse from unrighteousness, by its application to their own souls.

"O how little we regard the salvation purchased for us by the sufferings and death of Christ! We ought to love him with all our hearts. What else is worthy to *engross* our

affections, hopes, and desires? While passing through time, with time's things we must have to do; but how superior to all these should be our love of a Savior!

"My dear sister, time with us will soon be past, and eternity commence; and if an interest in a Savior has not been secured, how awful will that eternity be! But if, made holy here, through his blood and righteousness, we are permitted to dwell before the eternal throne, how will myriads of years pass, and seem but a moment! Let us no longer trifle with our true interests.

"Commending you to the protecting care and guiding grace of our heavenly Father,

"I am, my dear sister,

"Yours, affectionately,

"ANGELINE."

These letters, as well as others that we shall present, were written in the confidence of friendship, and in the spirit of sisterly love; and they show the very heart of the writer. At the date of the last, her sister Eliza was attending school at Troy, N. Y. This extract is only an index to the habitual feelings and efforts of Mrs. Sears, with reference to the salvation of her friends. She seemed always to feel more

than a sister's care, and was sometimes heard to say, "I would be willing to die if that would be the means of bringing my sisters to Christ." And if, at any time, she thought her deportment not calculated to place religion before them, in its own pure and attractive light, she suffered keenly.

We also see, in the light of this chapter, the importance of holding the "beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end." As fruit falls when disengaged from the tree, so sinks the soul severed from Christ. As the eagle is said to rise so long as he fixes his eye on the sun, so the Christian, with his eye on the Sun of righteousness, mounts upward till his gaze is diverted. Not "steadily looking unto Jesus," we cannot be guided by *his eye*. He is ever speaking to us words of eternal life; but lending our ear to the accuser, we cannot hear his voice. Christians often experience "seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord," but yield to the cruel enemy of their souls, look at themselves, unclasp their hold of the cross, and then mourn on again in comparative darkness.

## CHAPTER VI.

Proposal of marriage—Prayerfully considered—Decision—Qualifications sought—Conflicts—Remarks—Simple faith.

We have glanced at some passages in the life of our departed friend, up to the twenty-fifth year of her age. We trust this partial view will correctly illustrate her character. She had now reached a period at which she was compelled to enter upon a most serious and prayerful inquiry in regard to her future course. She was invited to become the bosom companion of an itinerant minister; and the question arose, "Shall I accept for my husband and earthly guide, a friend of my Savior, whose sphere of action will involve many severe trials and privations?" She examined this question with trembling solicitude, not because she dreaded the suffering in prospect, or coveted the gratifications which a different sphere in life might promise her; but the humble views she entertained of herself, caused her to shrink from responsibilities which she considered inseparable from the character of a minister's wife. She was accustomed to look on the heralds of the cross with veneration, and to regard their wives as companions with them not only in tribulation

and suffering, but in labors and in usefulness; and as she esteemed it a solemn thing to bear a commission from Heaven, as an embassador for Christ, so she felt that it was not an unimportant step to consent to a union with one so highly honored. She saw that to the minister's wife the Church looked for an example of purity and devotion; and that every word and action of hers must, in a peculiar sense, affect the interests of Zion. She deemed that she had been inadequate to the duties of even a private sphere, and dreaded lest more weighty responsibilities might involve her in a deeper condemnation. But, in such a relation, she hoped, on the other hand, to find superior aids to a life of entire consecration. It would separate her from the world, and its stern demands would, as it were, compel her to fidelity and perseverance in the Christian race. This step, she hoped, would effectually bind her to the cross.

Having decided to enter on the relation, she set herself assiduously to seek the qualifications for it; and as a requisite of primary importance, she became yet more earnest in prayer for purity of heart. Without the strength of full salvation, she felt that she could neither sustain the trials, nor perform the duties of her own new

sphere. The conflict was severe and protracted. She was often compelled to say,

> "Here I repent and sin again;
> Now I revive, and now am slain."

Instead of bringing her enemies to the Lord, that they might be destroyed, she attempted to contend against them; and it is not surprising that she was often foiled.

How prone we are, overlooking the directions given us in the Bible, to seek salvation by "the works of the law," rather than by "the hearing of faith!" It is written, "To him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." But we are wont to think—perhaps, rather, to feel—that we cannot believe before we have worked long and hard. It is written, "Ye will not come unto me that ye might have life." We cannot persuade ourselves to come to Him till we have made laborious preparations. While God is saying, "*Look unto me* and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth, for I am God, and there is none else," we are continually looking at ourselves—at our efforts—or, rather, our failures.

We are dismayed by the might of our enemies, and exclaim, "I am not swift to flee, nor

strong to oppose." But we are told, "The race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong. Fear them not, for I will go before you, and will fight for you." We are discouraged by the consciousness of our own weakness. Christ says, "My strength is made perfect in weakness. Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord."

And it would seem that they who have least confidence in themselves, sometimes labor most to establish a righteousness of their own. Not discerning the distinction between "the works of law," and "the obedience of faith," they work *for* faith, instead of working *from* faith. They see that the command is not only "exceeding broad," but, also, that it is "holy, and just, and good;" and they attempt to fulfill it—forgetting that it is only when God fulfills his promise, "I will circumcise thy heart to love the Lord thy God with all thy heart," that we are enabled to obey his command, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart." They know that they must be conquerors, and strive—forgetting that "we are in all things more than conquerors"—*only "through Him that loved us, and gave himself for us."* Those who learn to cast themselves at once *on Christ*

for salvation, save a world of toil and suffering. Such continue to labor with increased zeal and energy; but they prove the truth of those words,

"Labor is rest, and pain is sweet,
If thou, my God, art here."

"To work for Jesus, O how sweet! To wish to do something for my best Friend, how natural!" exclaimed one who had just entered the rest of faith.

When Christ was upon earth, he never said to one who came to him for healing, "You have not wept, and prayed, and repented enough. Stay till you have felt more pain of heart. Go and fit yourself, and then come and receive your request." His language was, "Believest thou that I am able to do this? And, again, "He that believeth shall be saved." "Fear not; only believe." "Said I not unto thee, that if thou wouldst believe, thou shouldst see the glory of God?" "When the comforter is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment. Of *sin, because they believe not on me.*" He upbraided his disciples with their "unbelief, and hardness of heart," and "he *could not* do many mighty works" where there was great unbelief.

But the perplexed soul is apt to inquire, "What shall I believe?" "Abraham believed God." Let us do this, and we shall find that "He is faithful that promised."

A merchant called on one deeply indebted to him, and demanded payment. "I am not able to pay." "But it is a just debt, and you must pay it." "Yes, it is a just claim; but I cannot pay you, for I have nothing wherewith to pay." "Nothing with which to pay! Well, I have a mind, then, to *give* you the debt;" adding, after a pause, "You are welcome to it:" and turned to withdraw. "This is an unexpected kindness," said the debtor; "I thank you sincerely—but suppose, as you forgive the debt, that you take this pen and *cross out the account.*" "Never mind that, you have my word, which is sufficient." "But, if you please, I would rather see the account crossed." "But do you doubt my word?" "I should not doubt it, but that the debt is so large, and the claim so just, and I am so unworthy of this great favor." "But if you doubt my word," said the creditor, "I must retract. I cannot remit such a claim against one who will question my veracity." The debtor paused a moment, casting about in his mind that the merchant was proverbial for

integrity, as well as for benevolence, and, bursting into tears of gratitude, he exclaimed, "Sir, I do believe you, and care not whether the account is crossed or not." The creditor then seized the pen, and crossed the account.

How natural it is for man thus to entreat God, insisting that pardon and cleansing shall go before, and faith or trust follow after; but God expects us to believe and be saved, rather than be saved and believe. The simplicity of faith is that at which many sincere souls stumble; as it is written, "But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness. Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, but, as it were, by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumbling-stone," Rom. ix, 31, 32. Thus did the subject of this memoir, till about one year before her death. Few were ever more sincere, laborious, and self-denying, than she was—few more consistent in all outward and inward religion, so far as this could be, without living, in the Scripture sense, "a life of faith on the Son of God."

## CHAPTER VII.

**Her marriage—Journey—Unexpected plan of life—Letter to her parents—Mount Holyoke—Letters—To her sisters, C—— and E——To her sister E——To her mother.**

Mrs. Sears was married to Rev. Clinton W. Sears, June 1, 1842, and, with him, immediately started on a long journey north and eastward. Her marriage outfit was prepared with strict reference to her Christian character and future destiny in life—in good taste; but with great simplicity, and with due regard to economy. During her journey, she evinced no diminution of zeal for the honor of her Savior. In every place she sought out His friends, and in several instances was greatly edified by associating with those who, as she said, "were filled with faith and the Holy Ghost." The same conscientious attention to duty—the same self-sacrificing spirit, resolutely yielding up her own will whenever she thought the interests of Christ's cause could, in any way, be promoted by it, were still manifested. While in the bounds of the Genesee conference, her husband was cordially invited to become a member of that body. With him she carefully considered

the proposal, and came to the conclusion that such a measure would, probably, promote his usefulness; and though it would preclude the possibility of her immediate return home, and thus separate her, unexpectedly, from her family, she unhesitatingly gave her consent, and soon after wrote to her parents a letter, setting forth her feelings on this subject. She says:

"And now I feel that I have indeed bid adieu to my home; for Mr. S—— has about concluded to join this conference at its next session, beginning Aug. 30th. I have thought over all the reasons for and against returning to Ohio, and, after considering the whole, think it, perhaps, better that we should remain here, though the trial will be great. No prospect of seeing home again—this thought I cannot dwell on—but am trying to get imbued with the proper spirit, for the discharge of those duties incident to the life I expect to live."

This letter also describes scenes of interest, which she had visited on her journey; and as its style is characteristic, and exhibits some tokens of that vivacity which belonged to her natural disposition, we insert another extract from it, which was published in the Ladies' Repository, without her knowledge at the time.

"From Northampton we went to Mount Holyoke, three miles east of that place. The ascent is steep and rough. About two-thirds of the way up we left the carriage, turned our horses out, hitched them to trees, and walked to the summit. It was very fatiguing, but amusing withal. There happened to be a number of visitors, some ascending, some descending—young gentleman dragging young ladies down the steep, with the rolling stones giving way under their feet, and they begging and pleading to be permitted to help themselves.

"We reached the summit, panting for breath, but immediately forgot our fatigue in transport with the—what shall I call it?—scene—view—panorama? All are too hackneyed words to apply here. For beauty, grandeur, variety, extent, it surpasses—is transcendently superior to any one scene I ever beheld. The mountain itself is eleven hundred feet above ocean level. The summit is cleared for an acre or two. Large rocks lie all about in wild confusion. An old house, all open and weather-beaten, stands there, with the names of—if the poet wrote truth—hundreds of fools carved on the floor, sides, door lintels, etc., whose only immortality is to be seen in public places. We took our

seat upon large rocks, overlooking an extent of eighty miles. I was reminded of the exclamation of the Arab chief, when he reached the summit of the hills surrounding Damascus. 'The extent of his view was about ten miles,' says the traveler. 'I have heard,' said this chief, 'that there is but one heaven—I will not enter there, lest I should never find another.'

"As I have no graphic powers, I shall not presume to attempt a description; but will try to give a kind of inventory of what I saw. First, apparently at the foot of the mountain—the distance is one and a half miles—is the beautiful, tranquil Connecticut, reminding one of Fenelon's description of Calypso's grotto. After describing several streams, sporting in the plain, he says, 'Others, after a long circuit, turned back, as if they wished to reascend to their source, and seemed unwilling to quit these enchanting shores.' So glides and winds this lovely Connecticut. It is seen for miles. I discovered seven or eight turns. Its banks are skirted with the most luxuriant foliage, cultivation, and multitudes, almost, of villages. From the mountain in front, Northampton seems to lie almost at the beholder's feet, though on the opposite side of the river. At the right, sev-

eral miles distant, is South Hadley, lying on a kind of peninsula, formed by a curve of the river. The principal street extends across so as to meet the river at each end. The street is very straight, and lined with large trees. These are the two nearest villages. Then, in the distance is Amherst, farther east; and about southwest lies New Haven, where 'East and West Rock' are visible—distance, eighty miles, as we were informed. Springfield, Hatfield, and numerous others, numbering thirty-six towns, are viewed from this point, which lie scattered over the apparent plain; though, in fact, the whole country, except some flats lying on the Connecticut, is broken and undulating; and, not far from Mount Holyoke, Mount Thom, or Tom, as it is pronounced, rises up in bold relief.

"I don't know how to give you an idea of the flats, which are under the highest degree of cultivation. Their crops are planted in strips, instead of irregular fields as ours. In riding along in our approach to the mountain, we observed this feature—now a long strip of corn, and then a strip of wheat, yellowing for the harvest; then a strip of clover or grass; then of some grain or other, in constant succession, without fences. The road seemed to be passing

through a farmer's cornfield. This, when seen from the height of Holyoke, looked like a mathematical programm; or a Michigan speculator's plan of some great Babylon, which his castle-building, prolific brain had reared; or like the country gentlewoman's pride—a beautiful piece of patchwork; or like— I am not apt at comparison, you know; so I must despair of giving you any thing like a just conception of the living reality.

"Beyond the flats, the gently sloping hills arise. Those that are cleared of their native forest are under a good state of cultivation, with here and there an isolated tree, or a small group of trees, interspersed over them, at graceful distances. Then still beyond rise the mountains, covered with impenetrable forests, presenting every shade of luxuriant foliage—every variety, or, rather, a great variety of fantastic figures, formed by the summits upon the horizon. The day was clear; but an occasional cloud, passing over the face of the sun, threw its shade on the fields below, the effect of which was very beautiful. I was never before placed in a position from which I could see the whole cloud—its erect form; but here it lay like a vail on the face of

sleeping beauty, with brightness and splendor beaming all around. Upon our first glance at the boundless scene, some one of our company remarked: 'I would rather have seen this than Niagara.' But between the two there are no points of resemblance, any more than between a terrific thunder-storm and a calm, peaceful, summer evening. This combined all the beautiful—some of the sublime; but it wanted Niagara's cataract, and Niagara's roar; while Niagara, with its cataract and roar, and many romantic beauties, wants variety, extent, and mellowness. Indeed, analogy fails. The two are as unlike as the emotions which each produces.

"After looking, admiring, exclaiming, musing, perhaps as long as I have been scribbling, and it will take you to decipher it, we began to think of getting down—a descent which we dreaded as much as Mr. Buckingham and his company did theirs from Cheops. So we commenced the Herculean task, in Indian file. By slipping, stumbling, and scrambling sometimes, we gained the base, right glad that we were all sound, though tired out."

In her father's house, Mrs. Sears had been "a living epistle, known and read of all;" and

now that she could no longer, by word and example, persuade her friends, she employed her pen. The following letters, addressed to her younger sisters, will show her concern, and her manner of urging them to be "reconciled to God:"

"*Middletown, Conn., Aug.* 3, 1842.

"My Dear Caroline and Eliza,—I address you together, because what I have to say to one will measurably apply to both. I feel very dull this morning, and if my letter is so, it will only be an outward expression of feeling within.

"The spirit of yours, Caroline, was truly mournful; but I think *I know* you are mistaken as to the cause of your discontent. It is what I have frequently told you: *there is no permanent* happiness or peace for the mind until it is fixed in its great Source—until the affections are centred upon God. 'Godliness with contentment is great gain.' I have thought I felt a great deal lately for you both—for your spiritual state. Suppose it were true, that the coming of Christ is as near at hand as next year—what would you do? I wish you both to decide in your minds—*what would you do?* I have no doubt you

are ready to say, that, if this were true, you would forsake a trifling world, and seek the forgiveness of your sins; you would flee to Christ for refuge. Yes, you know that not one thing from which you now derive pleasure could then give you aid. O, my sisters, let me exhort you again to make your peace with God! Surely, you must be convinced that nothing besides can satisfy you now; and nothing besides can stand you in the hour of death or judgment. Eternity may be much nearer to you than is the next year. If, then, you would think it important to prepare to meet your God next year, how much more important to be ready now!

"But I would not place the fear of punishment before you as the only, or the prime motive for seeking the salvation of your souls. No, I would rather point you to the *sufferings* of our dear Savior—his humility, his poverty, his temptations, his agony, HIS DEATH—his death for *you* and *me*. What love was there! Nothing but love was written on all his acts—his words. Can we not 'love him *because he first loved us?*' You know that you experience pleasure, and sometimes even delight, in the consciousness of loving another: how much

greater bliss in the consciousness of loving him who is the very author of love—who *is love!* And then a consciousness of his favor—with that you could feel secure and happy, if you were to awake at midnight, and behold the dead rising, and the world in flames. If you have the favor of God, you are his children, and nothing shall be able to harm you. Will you still refuse to seek him? Or do you ask, 'How shall I seek him?' Simply give him your heart. Do not say you cannot, but determine to try, and pray that you may have desires put into your hearts. Christ said, 'If ye, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, *how much more* will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that *ask* him!' Then how will he not *with himself* '*freely give us all things?*' In bestowing himself he has given the *greatest* gift: will he refuse any thing less?

"Do not look about you, and say, this or that professing Christian has such or such faults, or does such and such things. If there is not one whose life is what it should be, that does not, in the least, affect *your obligations.* Take your Bibles to find the way of life and truth. I know my letter will not

be as entertaining or as acceptable as though I had filled it with news of the day; but I feel that the subject which I have urged is the most important one to you. I am resolved to know more of the joys of religion myself than I have ever known, and to try to bring honor to God by the improvement of them.

"Your affectionate sister,

"ANGELINE."

TO HER SISTER ELIZA.

"*Rochester, N. Y., Sept.* 3, 1842.

"MY DEAR E.,—I have had a line from you but once; but I do not intend scolding you, for I know that you have a particular aversion to writing. My object in writing to you now, is to urge higher claims than mine upon you—those claims which a Savior has acquired by the shedding of his blood for you. When I think of the brevity and uncertainty of life, I am astonished that objects of sense should ever absorb our attention. My dear E., I know not where to begin, or what to say. I have so often tried, to the best of my ability, to press this important subject upon you, that I know not that I can offer any additional reasons why you should seek the Lord. The

favor of God alone can secure safety and happiness. What would not the sinner give for this in the day of His wrath, much as he contemns it now! But I would not dwell upon the terror of that awful day; but rather upon the love of God, manifested in the gift of Christ for our redemption. O could we properly view the plan which is wrought out for our salvation, how quickly should we yield ourselves to be saved! In looking at this subject, I fear you are apt to associate the imperfections of those that profess the religion of Christ with *this religion.* You should leave every thing but the Gospel, and your *wants* to be *met in that Gospel* through the merits of Christ. Go to *him* with the feeling,

'Other refuge have I none—
Hangs my helpless soul on thee.'

Read the tender expressions of Jesus, made at different times, and regard them as addressed directly from his lips to you—as though you were the only sinner to whom they were spoken. 'Him that cometh unto me I will *in no wise cast out.*' 'Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest.' Consider by whom these words were spoken: by Him to whom the elements

are subject, who commands the tempest, who is the director of the seasons, who openeth his liberal hand, and supplieth the wants of every living thing, and who will soon appear in majesty to judge the world. My dear sister, but one thing is necessary, and that is, to secure the favor and love of the Savior. O that you may *directly* commence the work!

"How happy is that mind that feels that it is at peace with God! How happy to be at rest from anxieties after the foolish honors and pleasures of the world—at rest from the fear of death—at rest from dread of judgment—at rest in Christ, knowing that God, for *Christ's sake,* has canceled all its sins! Yes, for Christ's sake alone; through his merits, not our fancied ones, are we accepted; and because Christ lives, we shall live also.

"Consider this subject coolly, rationally; and beseech the Lord to '*circumcise* your heart, that you may love *him* with *all* your heart.' What, love God! This looks as impossible as to 'remove mountains.' So it is. But he has found a way by which every heart may be so changed as to love him as certainly as it now loves carnal things. That way is pointed out in the Gospel. O that you may find it!

It is like a field containing goodly pearls, 'which, when a man found, he sold all that he had to buy it.' It is more than an equivalent for all we could possess of earth; and in the world to come it is everlasting life. *Everlasting life!* Read in the Revelation a description of the heaven in which that life is to be spent. All that we can imagine of all the beauty, splendor, and loveliness of earth, with all its gems congregated, cannot compare with the description of that bright world. And then this life is never-ending. Is not this a sufficient inducement to you to seek it?

"But then we are assured that our *supreme* happiness will be in beholding Him who purchased this life for us. If we neglect to secure these joys, will it not be just for God to cast us away from his presence for ever? Let this henceforth be your chief business. Take the word of God for your counsel. When you read, pray earnestly that the Holy Spirit may open your spiritual eyes to behold wonderful things in his law, and you will be astonished at the beauties you behold. O that God's Spirit may accompany the unworthy letter of

"Your affectionate sister,

"ANGELINE."

The following letter, written to her mother, also, August 3, 1842, shows more definitely her own religious state:

"My Dear Ma,—We went to New Haven the day we wrote you last, where we spent the remainder of the week. We spent the time with some Methodist friends. Sister C—— has enjoyed religion a number of years; but about three years since she experienced entire sanctification, and still enjoys it. Her theme is a Savior's love. She was stirred up to seek a pure heart by hearing a sermon from the text, 'And I was afraid,' from the parable of the talents. The preacher described the various ways in which professing Christians excuse themselves from the discharge of duty, through fear—fear of man—fear of self—fear of not doing in a proper manner, etc.; and the consequence was, that *that* servant was bound and cast into outer darkness. She felt that the sermon was addressed to *her*. Timidity was her great hinderance. She immediately concluded that the only way to overcome it, was to seek to give herself wholly to the Lord. She did so; and 'such a blessing and glory descended into my soul,' said she, 'as had not entered into my heart to conceive.

Crosses which had appeared as mountains, became as plains; Jesus was with me in my domestic affairs, however vexatious; and when I thought my heavenly Father was about to remove my beloved child from earth, though once I thought a heavier affliction could not befall me, now I said, in perfect submission, 'Thy will be done.'

"This is but a specimen of the conversations she held while I was with her. Her views of Divine love are very expansive. She feels truly that in Omnipotence is her strength. O how blessed to feel that self, our greatest foe, is entirely gone, and that Christ reigns supreme within us! My conceptions of the plan of salvation are strengthened by hearing her converse; and I was much encouraged; for her natural temperament, I think, is very much like mine. If, then, grace has done this for her, may it not accomplish as much in me? Certainly it may. I feel more and more assured that I shall not be able to do any thing for the glory of God, until I am fully consecrated to his service. My enjoyments—my faith, gratitude, and love, are fluctuating continually; and, except I get my feet established in the ways of holiness, I cannot honor my Redeemer with a

consistent life. Since the blessing I received in the country, of which I wrote you in Mr. S——'s letter, I have suffered strong temptations, doubts, etc. At times I felt as though the enemy would overcome me; and then the fullness and certainty of the promises would flow into my mind, and for a moment I would take hold of them and receive comfort—then unbelief would rise up in its strength. So I have lived till Sabbath afternoon, when I heard brother S—— preach from, 'There hath no temptation taken you, but such as is common to man,' etc. I was again comforted. My purpose is fixed; and though my faith is weak, yet I know I have nowhere else to go.

'This all my hope, and all my plea,
For me the Savior died.'

"We found here your thrice welcome letter. I am rejoiced to find that you have increasing strength and delight in the service of God. Nothing is so important, and, when properly viewed, so desirable as *holiness*, for without it we cannot see the Lord. Those who know most of the deep things of God, say that the delights are ever varying, ever new. Then our time is short. A moment's space may hurry us into the realities of eternity. How should we

be up and doing, and be careful that all our words and acts should, in some way, tend to the honor and praise of our Redeemer!

"I sometimes feel deeply depressed when I think of my many defections from duty in my family; and though I remember *our* intercourse, especially for the last four months, with some pleasure, yet I know I have not always discharged my duty to you. But I know you look with charity at my faults, and, wherein I have failed, forgive.

"I am anxious to get settled, where I can have my regular, undisturbed seasons for devotion, and where I hope to be made of some use to some class of my fellow-beings. I deeply regret that Mrs. R—— is not in the enjoyment of a Savior's love. How can she be satisfied with the world's trifling toys? She cannot, surely, have a correct view of the plan of salvation. Too many look upon religion as a necessary evil, instead of a *supreme good*. How ungrateful it is to view the only plan which a God of love could devise to save us, in such a light! What an evidence this of our lost condition! My love and gratitude to pa.

"Your unworthy but affectionate

"ANGELINE."

## CHAPTER VIII.

**Commencement of itinerancy—Fidelity—Attachment to the work—Residence at Vienna—Revival—Visit to Cincinnati—Letters to her husband—Sabbath traveling—Residence at Pen Yan—Letters to her mother—To her sister—To Mrs. Rev. C. Brooks—Transfer to Ohio conference.**

Mrs. Sears now commenced, with her husband, an itinerant life. She had counted the cost, and her purpose was fixed to attempt all its duties, and encounter all its trials, as far as she might be enabled, with fidelity and meekness. We have seen that she started, and, as we trace her steps, we shall find that she also proceeded, tremblingly; yet she was undeviating in her course. She often almost sunk under the trial; yet she always made the effort to take up and bear the cross. She never complained of the suffering she endured in these efforts—never said, "I cannot do such and such duties," because "the cross is so heavy, and I am so timid;" her only complaint was, "I am not worthy to stand out as a laborer for Christ—I need more grace." All the pain she seemed to feel, in the performance of any religious service, arose from the conviction that she had not sought and obtained the fitness to be

thus employed. Even her feeble health was never made an excuse to shun painful duties.

During her absence from her parents, she was several times very ill. On these occasions her fortitude was unflinching, and her husband was never suffered to spend an hour with her in the omission of his ministerial or pastoral duties. She was, in a peculiar sense, devoted to the work of the ministry, and in all things manifested a particular regard for all who were engaged in that work. She always spoke of the preachers' wives as her *sisters*, with a tone of emphasis expressive of the most affectionate interest in them. During the time that her husband was associated with the Genesee conference, she denied herself the relief of ordinary assistance in her household toils. When chidden by a friend for thus unnecessarily taxing her physical energies, she gave some slight reasons, and then, in a low voice, said, "Many of my sisters [the ministers' wives] *are compelled* to live in this way, and *I prefer to fare with them.*" But to her family, or her friends, the comforts of her habitation were not diminished by this lack of domestic aid. Every thing in her dwelling bore the stamp of neatness, order, and taste. Her table furnished a model of

Christian economy and comfort. It was a rule which she rigidly observed, never to permit the expenditures of her family to exceed the annual provision made for her husband by his charge; and yet the guest at the parsonage which she occupied, found himself more comfortably and agreeably entertained than he often was in the abodes of luxury and splendor.

Discretion was a prominent trait in her character. She seldom offended with her tongue, because "in her mouth was the law of kindness." The severity with which she judged herself, led her to think charitably of all others, and the assiduity with which she attended to her own business, precluded her interfering with matters which did not belong to her. Her fidelity in visiting the sick and poor, in the various stations to which her husband was appointed, and the impartial regard she manifested for all the members of his flock, without respect to condition or station, secured for her the confidence and affection of all classes.

The first appointment of Mr. Sears was Vienna, N. Y., where a glorious revival crowned his labors. Mrs. S. wrote to her mother a minute and interesting account of this revival. She rejoiced in this early proof of God's ap-

probation of her husband's efforts in the work of the ministry, and in the salvation of precious souls, who came by scores to the altar of the Lord; and she labored with untiring zeal to promote the work, seeming to say,

"No cross, no suffering I decline;"

yet she complained of great coldness of heart. Perhaps her habit of self-accusation was never more strongly manifested than in the following extracts, which, when taken in connection with her faithful efforts to promote the cause of her Savior, give great force to the remark, "One single act of faith carries the soul farther than years of painful toiling without it." She says:

"My Dear Ma,—Truly it would seem that there are indications that these are 'the last days.' The Spirit of the Lord is everywhere being poured out—sinners plucked as brands from the burning. Even my cold heart says, 'The Lord's name be praised!' For a number of days past I have felt much burdened in reference to my family, especially to Caroline, Eliza, and Bithia.* I have wept and prayed for them, that they may be turned from the folly and vanity of the world, and find happiness and

*Her sisters.

safety in Christ. My husband's faithful labors—for such I may call them—are certainly being blest; though he will not acknowledge himself an instrument, but says he wishes to hide himself, and God *only* appear as source, means, and end; which is right. He has been bold and uncompromising in declaring the counsel of God—has not spared the lofty sinner, while the lowest and most degraded have duly shared attention. There are many of both classes in the congregation.

"Before our meeting was commenced, he preached a few sermons to the Church, and began his labor of visiting, warning sinners, and stirring up the formal. He then called a meeting of the Church, and asked each one in relation to his state, and discharge of duty—such as secret prayer, family altar, etc.—and then put the question, 'Are you ready to talk to sinners in relation to their souls?' Some thought they were; others said not. Some confessed their sins, etc. Well, the consequence is, that the Church is waking up. Some have been sanctified wholly; a number of backsliders reclaimed; and now the world seems to be awakened to a sense of their condition. To go into the church *every* morning, a person would sup-

pose himself in a crowded city congregation, instead of that of a village of a few hundred people. And they do not come to hear overpowering eloquence—not 'enticing words of man's wisdom;' but the voice of the Spirit of God speaks directly to the sinner. Some Episcopalians and Presbyterians seem as much interested as any in the meetings. The minister of the latter is often with us. Many of his members also attend, and speak, and pray, and labor; while members of their families present themselves at the altar for prayers. Last evening three children of a member of another Church were forward—fashionable, high-headed girls—and their father knelt and prayed for them. After the altar is surrounded, and the seats in front filled, the body slips are cleared, and sometimes more than half filled with mourners. Our morning meetings, which begin at ten o'clock, or a little after, and frequently continue till two, or later in the afternoon, are most interesting. The house is not so full as in the evening, though the lower part is well filled for comfort. This morning there were twelve conversions—several heads of families. And the young speak the praises of the Savior. At five a meeting is held for conver-

sation with those who wish to converse in the class-room. At six a general prayer meeting is held in the body of the church; at seven preaching. During the intervals from morning meeting till five, Mr. S—— visits from house to house. Sometimes brother C—— and he go together; at others, they separate to different parts of the village; so that I scarce see them all day long, except in meeting. Last night, while Mr. S—— was exhorting below, brother C—— broke out in the gallery in a feeling exhortation, and invited mourners into the class-room, which was soon filled. After all, there are scoffers and idle spectators, but they stay till the last.

"I am the same poor, miserable, doubting, fearful, and unbelieving wretch; all the while condemned for not doing my duty, or else tempted and discouraged when I attempt to do it. I often tremble lest I shall share the lot of the servant who, when rendering his account, said, 'I was afraid!' O when shall I see the hour in which the spirit of life and health, and liberty of the Gospel, is fully planted in me—when no fear but the fear of God shall find an entrance into my heart! I frequently weep over my multitude of faults,

and unfitnesses for the place I occupy, and fear lest I prove only a hinderance to Mr. S——. So much shrinking from duty—or, if I attempt to bear the cross, it is with so much faltering as to destroy all the good which might otherwise be accomplished. And then mortified pride, and temptation, like a flood, overwhelm my spirit; and, if it were not for a little grace, and the boundless love of a Savior, I should make shipwreck of faith. Yet I frequently have visions of the loveliness of Christ, and the beauty of his plan for saving a guilty world, and my spirit begins to soar—to grasp the heights of redeeming love—when lo, all my fearfulness and timidity return, it seems with redoubled force, to reduce me to more certain bondage, and I feel as the apostle did when he said, 'O wretched man that I am!' Thus it is with me as nearly as I can describe. I have said so much that you may know the better how to pray for me. My hour is nine o'clock, though I cannot always be punctual, owing to various interruptions."

During the following summer her health became so bad that a journey was deemed necessary; and leaving her husband to attend to his pastoral charge, she returned, with such com-

pany as she could obtain, to her father's house. Immediately after reaching home, she wrote to Mr. S—— a circumstantial account of her journey, in which she says, "I have done one thing which I know will grieve my dear husband: I have traveled on Sabbath, though I had determined not to do it." She then describes the efforts she made to avoid it, and the reasons which induced her, in her enfeebled state, to continue with her company, who would not be persuaded to lie by, and the pain she had suffered during the day. She states that she said so much on the subject that one of the company became offended. "I assured the lady," she adds, "that I intended to censure no one but myself; that I did not wish to bind *her* conscience if she felt that she was doing right; but that I did not think I was, and *no circumstances* should ever again lead me into such a step. I spent the day reading the Bible, tracts, etc., and praying and conversing, as well as I could under the circumstances; but it was an unhappy day; and, beside the condemnation of breaking the Sabbath, I knew that I should have the disapprobation of my dear husband. You will forgive, will you not? and say nothing about it there—not to cover my sins, but

for the example's sake. At Newark a 'canal missionary' came on the boat, and had prayers. He asked me if I traveled on Sabbath. I told him I did, and how I felt about it."

In this letter she expresses great concern that some of her friends are yet out of the ark of safety. "Ma and myself," she says, "have a season of prayer soon after breakfast every morning, in which they are special subjects of remembrance."

The following is an extract from another letter to her husband. It bears date

"*Cincinnati, Aug.* 18, 1843.

"I feel comfortable in body this morning, and some hunger and thirst in my soul for new and greater blessings. How is it with you, my love? I am enjoying the blissful certainty that you are a son of God—a chosen one, through the Beloved. Ma and myself have just had our morning season of prayer. I had been preparing for it by a careful reading of a portion of the word. My soul struggled, and I was overwhelmed by the thought, Can it be by mere simple faith that I may inherit the promises? But I did not quite get a firm hold. O how vacillating my heart! how hard to take God at his word!

"I had a delightful and profitable visit at sister Taylor's, a day or two since. She is as triumphant as ever—I think more so. She seems to be altogether in advance of where she was when I left Cincinnati. She said, 'I thank my blessed Savior, I know that grace has had a perfect triumph in my soul. I experience the witness of it from day to day.' She told me some of her temptations, which encouraged me much; for I found, to my surprise, that she has such as are common to me."

Mr. Sears' second appointment was Pen Yan, a very pleasant station, at a considerable distance from the former. In her first letter from her new home, she gives her mother a minute account of her furniture, of their dwelling, and of their manner of life.

The following extract from this letter is tinged with a hue of playfulness, which was natural to her, though seldom indulged in after her conversion; yet her conscientious regard for the cause she had espoused, and the self-sacrificing spirit she carried out in every thing, will be discerned in it:

"Dear Ma,—We have almost got settled in the monotonous routine of housekeeping. We rise before daylight, and sometimes break

fast by the lamp. Mr. Sears reads, while we, Caroline [her sister then staying with her] and I, busy us in getting breakfast—as baked potatoes, meat, cold bread usually, and cold water. The visit of a minister, a few days ago, called forth the first cup of coffee we have had. C—— does admirably without coffee, taking a baked potato instead. We get no dinners, but lunch, and eat—not take tea—just before night. A woman washes for me once in two weeks; otherwise we are our own servants.

"I have tried to make prudent expenditures in the purchase of furniture; but I have thought, since the purchase of one article—a small solar lamp—that it hardly becomes our situation, and the example we should set, though it is not a superfluity."

At the close of the notice she gives of her furniture, she says, in much perplexity, "What is duty? All these things are a great care to me. I have tired you with the recital, and my arm aches with it as your eyes may.

"I find here a considerably refined, intelligent society—have received several calls, out of the Church as well as in—but have not returned any; for I scarce go out of the house from Sabbath to Sabbath, except to female

prayer meeting, class, etc. My own spiritual state is low; I get some aspirations, but

'Weak is the effort of my heart,
And cold my warmest thought.'

The cause of it I know. I have allowed do mestic cares to push aside secret seasons of devotion; there has been a want of watchful-ness and prayer, giving up to care-taking, and even an impatient spirit. Now, can the Savior dwell in such a heart? But I repent and resolve; sin, repent, and resolve again, until all confidence in myself is lost. And yet, whither shall I go? He alone hath the words of eternal life—of *establishing* grace."

But while she thus wrote "bitter things against herself," she was not unmindful of the spiritual interests of her friends, as will be shown by the following to her sister Bithia:

"Write to me all about your spiritual state, experience, and desires. There are great enjoyments in communion with God, for the loss of which naught of the world can make up. Seek these in deadness to the world and sin, and you will realize happiness of which your heart has never conceived."

In a postscript to the above she addresses her sister Eliza:

"Where art thou? Sleeping in spiritual death, or awake and pressing after a heavenly crown, in the heavenly race? O how trifling and empty are all creature sources of enjoyment! But this you know, and you are convinced that in God alone you can find full satisfaction for your mind—that the Savior is worthy of all your heart."

A letter, the commencement of which is dated "Pen Yan, March 26, 1844," to her intimate friend, Mrs. Rev. C. Brooks, will farther indicate her state of mind and manner of life at this period:

"My Dear Mary,—I had long been wishing to know your address, and had once written to Cincinnati inquiring. I thought, on reception of yours, that I would lose no time in replying to it; but C—— was then absent, and all the little household cares rested upon me, which, though neither very numerous nor onerous, rather unfitted me for the spirit of writing. I am very glad to hear of brother B——'s improved health.

"*April* 2.—Interruptions will come to housekeepers, you know. I am still struggling with the world, the flesh, and the devil; and, recently, have seemed to gain no victories. Car-

nal nature strives hard to break out in open rebellion; and I have but little of that faith which *overcometh* present difficulties. Indeed, such is, at least, the apparent dominion of sin over me, that I often fear I have none of the spirit of Christ; and then comes the conclusion—'I am none of his.' My spirit struggles thus this morning, but am trying, perseveringly, to look to Him who alone hath the gift of grace by which I may triumph.

"We have, in many respects, a pleasant charge—a village of between two and three thousand people. There is much, however, in the Church which ought not to be—much of every spirit but the spirit of Christ. But there are some whose garments are undefiled, and whose life is hid with Christ in God—salt which has not lost its savor. There have been some conversions among us during the winter; about twenty in our own Church in the village, and as many in a little neighborhood, where Mr. S—— has been laboring for a few days.

"I don't know what I should do with as many *little home cares* as you have—my friends would seldom have the pain or pleasure of hearing from me, I'm sure.

"How do I like housekeeping? Its *pleas-*

*ures* I am much pleased with: its cares, I would, if practicable, escape. But, as in this life

'Each pleasure hath its poison too,'

I am obliged to take all as they come. With both you are probably well acquainted. I would be delighted to have you step in, not to see the exquisite order of my domestic arrangements, but for the pleasure of entertaining you in my own plain little home. Thus far I have kept no hired help, save washing. Caroline has performed her part well—twice attempted the office of pastry cook, and succeeded admirably.

"It would, indeed, be delightful for us to be so near together, that we could, by a short walk or ride, make each other frequent calls; but uncertainty attends all our projects for the future, and I try to form none. Mr. S—— is becoming more and more interested in this conference. Though he appreciates his newly-acquired friends in the Ohio conference, he can scarcely make up his mind to leave those in this. If he does, it will be entirely for the gratification of mine; and, however agreeable it would be for me to be near them, I say nothing to influence his decision. My health has

been, much of the winter, comfortable. I have housed myself, especially at night. If I should continue to improve, my health could not be urged as a reason for a change. I submit it to Providence, knowing that, if he directs, all will be right.

"The book you left for me in C——'s trunk, I found quite instructive. I have been reading, and hearing read, several works, the most interesting of which are D'Aubigne's History of the Reformation, Life of Harlan Page, and that insinuating, fascinating, but, in reference to theology, dangerous writer--Channing. But my time for reading is very limited, unless I neglect my domestic affairs. The want of time on my own part, is, however, in a good measure, supplied by my affectionate husband, who reads aloud to me when no interruptions prevent.

"Remember us affectionately to brother B——. Let us hear from you soon. Kiss the little ones many times for us.

"Your ever affectionate

"ANGELINE."

During the succeeding summer it was my privilege to visit Mrs. Sears at her own home, and to spend some days with her at a camp meeting near her residence, and also to be much

in her company at the ensuing session of the Genesee conference. She complained much of the want of religious feeling and zeal, but appeared, to all observers, as an example of piety and devotion. The sincere, earnest fervency of her prayers, especially during the conference, will long be remembered by those who were permitted to join her in this exercise. On her account, her parents were extremely solicitous that Mr. Sears should be transferred to the Ohio conference, deeming that a northern climate must be injurious to one predisposed to pulmonary disease. His transfer was now and then the theme of conversation in her presence; and often the effort was made in vain to draw from her an expression of opinion, or of choice, in reference to it. So cautiously did she avoid giving any intimation of her wishes, that the most intimate friend could not learn her views. The superintendent having expressed a willingness to transfer him, it was submitted to the decision of Mr. Brooks, her father, under the guidance, as she hoped, of her *heavenly* Father. The transfer was made; and in September, 1844, Mr. S—— was appointed to Oxford station, in the Ohio conference.

While they resided at Oxford, there was no

important change in her experience. It might be said of her, that she "pursued the even tenor of her way;" yet she appeared to gain spiritual strength, and once, during the year, was very near grasping the blessing which had so long been the object of her pursuit. Perhaps she was never more highly appreciated as a pastor's wife, than in this station. And the example of her fidelity, consistency, and fervor, will long live in the memory of the Church there, many of whom would, doubtless, deem it a privilege to add to this sketch a more minute description of her Christian virtues, did circumstances permit.

I close this chapter by remarking, that had this dear child of God spent the time yielded up to self-reproaches, in giving "unto the Lord the glory due unto his name," she would, doubtless, have experienced great deliverances, and achieved great victories. The exercise of thanksgiving and praise is rational, Scriptural, and salutary. It not only encourages faith, hope, and love, but often, when these graces are dormant in the soul, awakens them, and fills the spirit with gladness. How many sincere Christians employ more *hours* in prayer than *moments* in thanksgiving! The dependent, whose

hand is perpetually reached forth, crying, "give," but is seldom lifted up in thankfulness for relief, must be deemed ungrateful, and esteemed unworthy. How much more should *we* thank and praise, upon whom Heaven showers its richest blessings till we cannot even number them!

And we know that this employment is pleasing to God; for he has said, "Whoso offereth praise, glorifieth me." The saved in heaven seem to forget all else while they sing, "For thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood!" And does not this song belong, also, to the saints on earth? He has redeemed *us*, as well as those glorified spirits. And he has said, "It is finished—all things are now ready." It is for us to avail ourselves of the proffered grace. "The Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." Should we not praise for such abundant provision? What wonder that the Psalmist exclaimed, "I will bless the Lord at all times: his praise shall continually be in my mouth!" "Let every thing that hath breath praise the Lord!"

In all this we do not exclude, from proper

Christian devotion, that "indignation" at self and its unworthiness—that self-abasement and self-lothing, without which no poor sinner can be properly humbled, or can justly appreciate Christ and his atonement. But, having a proper conviction of these things, our deliverance from them must be sought, not in constant self-reflection, but by "looking unto Jesus." So may the reader "look and be saved."

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## CHAPTER IX.

**Removal to Portsmouth, O.—Self-consecration—Visit—Letters—To Mrs. H——To her mother—The sick—Dying triumphs—Nelson on infidelity—Letters to Mrs. H——.**

In 1845 Mr. Sears was appointed to Portsmouth, Ohio, where Mrs. S—— had many relatives, and where serious difficulties had existed in the Church. She was much afflicted at this appointment, dreading that she and her husband would not be able to reconcile differences so formidable. This induced her to apply, with great earnestness, to her heavenly Father for wisdom; and so circumspect was her deportment, in this difficult position, that it is believed she neither gave offense nor incurred censure while in this charge.

Her letters during this period continue to indicate the same spirit of self-distrust and self-accusation, mingled, however, with more of confidence in God. She had now entered a region in her pilgrimage from which she could more clearly view "the promised land;" and her eager soul panted for its refreshing shades and fountains. The following scrap, found among her papers, without exact date, appears to have been written early in January, 1846:

"This morning I give myself a new sacrifice to God. I venture upon his mercy, his faithfulness, his love—his almighty love—to take and seal me his for time and for eternity. While returning from the watch meeting, where the Lord manifested himself to some of his children, but where my barren soul had remained unmoved, my husband exhorted me to reckon myself 'dead indeed unto sin,' and 'alive unto God.' Sin and unbelief seemed to gather new strength, as I gave vent to my carnal reasonings—as, how could I reckon that to be so which was not, etc. So I laid me down and slept, and so awoke. The exhortation was renewed before we knelt for morning prayer. Without any special emotion, I asked the Lord to take me, purge me, and make me his for

ever. This was the language employed, 'I give myself to him; I will be his; I *am* his, for he has purchased me with his own blood. Henceforth, I will live no longer to myself; I steadily look up to Christ, who has promised to save me to the uttermost, if I come to him. I come—I *do* come—I wait for the promise, for the witness, to be saved from all my idols—all my filthiness of flesh and spirit. His word is faithful—he will do it. Thou wast manifested to take away all my sin—to destroy the works of the devil in my heart—to cleanse me from all iniquity—to make me zealous in thy cause, in all good works—to thoroughly furnish me for every good work. I cast myself upon thy faithfulness and power:

"Help I every moment need."

My need shall be momentarily supplied; for thou sendest not *thine* a warfare at their own charges; but, though principalities and powers, and all foes, combine against them, thou art stronger than all. O clothe me with thy whole armor, that I may be able to withstand all the fiery darts of the enemy—to withstand all vain imaginings, or worldly allurements; and, having done all, to stand.' "

She adds, under the date of January 3,

"My confidence has been unshaken, that God accepts me, through faith in his Son. Since that act of consecration, I have felt nothing contrary to love in my heart, though Satan has striven hard for entrance. Praise unto the name of my great High Priest! he has kept me for nearly three days; yet I have felt every moment the need of the merit of his death. I cannot say that I am sanctified wholly; but I believe the work is begun, and, by looking steadfastly unto Jesus, may and will be accomplished. Hasten it, O Lord! Reign supreme in my heart!

'Accept the sacrifice I bring;'
'Here, Lord, I give myself to thee,
'Tis all that I can do!'

O never let me depart from thee more!

"Heard an edifying sermon by J. J——, this morning, from, 'Howbeit, this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting,' with the contexts. I felt that the Lord directed the discourse to encourage my poor soul. This afternoon am trying to lay fresh hold upon the promises."

Under date of January 28, we find the following: "Since the above date, diverse have been my states of mind—now pressing toward the mark, now measuring back my steps to

earth again: at times violently assaulted by the powers of darkness, and as violently resisting; but soon, alas! overcome and betrayed into sin; then casting away the beginning of my confidence. O, shall I ever be established in the highway of holiness—shall I ever be settled and grounded in the faith? Shall faith in God ever be the all-governing, all-controlling rule of my life? O that I could have no confidence in the flesh! O that self were annihilated, and God filling where self once lived! After so many falls and departures from God, I scarce dare look up again; yet, O my soul, thou hast the encouraging word, 'If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father,' even Jesus."

In February of this year I was again permitted to spend a few days with Mrs. Sears, and to witness her growing zeal for the interests of the Church—a zeal which, seemingly, led her to disregard every selfish consideration—and, also, to observe her care for the sick and poor of the flock.

Some of these, on account of their deep experience in the things of God, were peculiarly dear to her, and she often spoke of the comfort and edification she had derived from her com-

munion with them. In her efforts to relieve the sufferings of others she took the varioloid, and the attack commenced during my stay. This circumstance afforded a clue to some of her unobserved walks, and brought out from their cautious concealment some of the treasures of her heart's true charity. At the beginning of her illness a protracted meeting was in progress, which she had attended with deep solicitude for its results. When she could no longer get to the sanctuary, the unbidden tear would flow; but not a word for her own suffering escaped her lips. To this visit the following characteristic note has reference:

"*Portsmouth, March* 6.

"My Dear Mrs. H——,—When your letter came Mr. S—— was absent in Chillicothe, and my boy and myself were both sick, or I should have earlier thanked you for your timely remembrance after leaving us.

"In religion it is with me much as when you were here. The reading of the little book, 'Mrs. Cox,' quickened me, in a small degree, for holiness; but, like the early dew, it soon vanished away; and when from my native stupidity I am aroused, it seems to be only to increase my darkness and difficulties.

"I thank you for the book, but am in doubt whether to acknowledge it, because your—forgive if I say proud—nature forbids the acceptance of a *trifle* without a return, while my gift did not itself begin to be a return for former obligations.

"Ma wishes me to visit them as soon as they are settled. I don't know that I can; but if I do, would like to arrange to be there when you will be likely to be in the city, could I know when. I wish to see you. Don't *tax* yourself to write; but, when quite convenient, I am always glad to receive a word of exhortation, reproof, or encouragement.

"In haste, but love,

"A. B. Sears."

A few days after she writes to her mother, who had just removed to a beautiful country residence on Mount Auburn, a mile and a half from the city, as follows:

"*Portsmouth, March,* 27, 1846.

"Dear Ma,—I heard of your recent illness through Mr. G——, from C——'s letter to him. At first I felt very sorry; but when I recollected that our heavenly Father doth not willingly afflict, nor yet without design, I thought, perhaps, it might be needful to keep

your mind from being too much given to your new home, and the pleasant scenes attending it. I have felt more of the Spirit's influence for a week or two past, than for several weeks previous. I feel more than ever my duty to *be holy*. But O how easily does my mind glide from the spiritual to the temporal! Yet I believe it is my privilege to praise, and be thankful for the blessings I have, and, holding fast thereto, to look for more.

"I feel, especially, the need of more charity, that I may be enabled to bear all things, and to hope all things—a charity which never faileth; for what avails faith, or profession, without love? In this I have always failed. O that my heart were filled with love!

"How truly said the apostle: 'Now abideth faith, hope, charity; but the greatest of these is charity.' I was much quickened and incited to pursue after holiness by the conversation of brother B——, of the Ebenezer charge, a few evenings since. He passed through here, and spent the night with us. I hope you will become acquainted with him. He carries a cheerful, loving piety, in as easy a manner as any one I ever saw.

"Our third quarterly meeting commences

to-morrow. Brother J—— is an evangelical, practical, edifying preacher.

"Eliza wrote that you insist on my coming home. It is not consistent for me to come now; and I doubt often whether I ought to go at all, unless some affliction calls me. It breaks up our course of living, and Mr. S—— feels lost and lonely, which, I fear, would much retard his studies, and, perhaps, his usefulness. Yet I think some of visiting you in May

"I would like to hear soon how you like the new place; and especially to have something to rouse me up in the way *to life.*

"Yours, affectionately,

"ANGELINE."

The following extracts are presented as farther characteristic notices of her religious experience:

"*Portsmouth, April* 27, 1846.

"DEAR MRS. H——,—I did not write you at T——, because I could not definitely fix the time, and I expected to be in Cincinnati soon enough to reach you there.

"A blotted letter is unpardonable; but a steel pen and haste must be my apology. I was going to add that my *bound* soul still struggles for liberty. Christ is worthy of all my heart,

and I feel it. Would that my soul could always be attracted by the loveliness of his love!

"I think of you often; and often, though feebly, pray that you may be more than victorious in the mighty conflict.

"If you are obliged to leave the city before May 12th, and will give me one line saying so, I will try to make my arrangements to be there as early as the 5th or 6th.

"In haste, but grateful love,

"Your unworthy

"ANGELINE."

"*Portsmouth, Friday morning, June* 12, 1846.

"MY EVER DEAR MRS. H——,—Yours of the 8th inst. was received last evening, and read *without the least difficulty,* as I am very familiar with your hand.

"I rejoice in M—— B——'s blessings, and pray that she may ever, through grace, be 'more than conqueror' over self, sin, and the adversary. Surely, if she can experience, and hold fast this great salvation, even *I* may not despair. Not that she is more prone to sin—no, not within many degrees as much so as I am; but her constitutional timidity and habits of doubting have been, I think, as great as those of any of us. I rejoice in your victories,

though in captivity myself. I have much comfort in praying for my friends, especially so lately, in remembering you. Every time I have the privilege of seeing you, I feel that the bonds which unite my affections to you, are strengthened, and my desire that you may be in all things perfect, increased. This is rather a bold expression from one all-imperfect.

"Several sick, nigh unto death, here. One, an old lady, who has, from infancy, feared the Lord, and worked righteousness, but who has always had a fear of death more than is common—a very *great dread.* Yet she is now perfectly triumphant. Yesterday, while we visited her, she broke out singing,

'On Jordan's stormy banks I stand,' etc.

Her countenance glowed; and, as though she saw the departed saints, she pointed and said, 'There is sister ——, who died happy in the Lord, and there is sister Offner, who beckons to me, and I'll soon be there.' She also remarked, 'I've been wandering up and down the banks of Jordan for six months, and once in a while I got a glimpse of the other side. I've feared the dark valley many years, but now I've come where I thought it was, and it is all light, for Jesus is here.'

"I think there is no doubt but the spirits of the just made perfect, are sometimes shown to the pious, even before their entrance into the spirit world. I felt to praise such unmerited grace as this sister received, and renew my efforts to secure it for the final hour.

"Yours in haste, but in love,

"ANGELINE."

The reader has, doubtless, formed her own opinion on the subject above referred to. The writer has nothing to affirm one way or the other. That saints on earth *have* seen the glorified, is a fact which no believer of the Bible disputes. The transfiguration was one occasion of the kind. That God can, if he choose, cause both the living and the dying to enjoy such visions, is equally indisputable. Whether he does, *in these days*, allow this privilege to his expiring saints, is another question. There are views of death-bed scenes in "Nelson on Infidelity," of a remarkably interesting kind, and equally so, whether it be granted or denied, that this aged disciple, and others who have held similar language in death, were under the influence of an excited imagination, or gave utterance to truth.

Dr. Nelson says: "My attention was awa-

kened very much by observing the dying fancies of the servants of this world, differing with such characteristic singularity from the fancies of the departing Christian. It is no uncommon thing for those who die to believe they see, or hear, or feel, that which appears only fancy to bystanders. Their friends believe that it is the overturning of their intellect. I am not about to enter into the discussion whether it is, or is not, always fancy. Some attribute it to more than fancy; but inasmuch as, in many instances, the mind is deranged, whilst its habitation is falling into ruins around it, and inasmuch as it is the common belief that it is only the imagination about which I am writing, we will look at it under the name of fancy.

"The fanciful views of the dying servants of sin and the devoted friends of Christ, were *strangely* different, as far as my observation extended. One who had been an entire sensualist and a mocker at religion, whilst dying, appeared in his senses in all but one thing. 'Take that black man from the room,' said he. He was answered that there was none in the room. He replied, 'There he is, standing near the window. His presence is very irksome to me; take him out.' After a time, again and again,

his call was, 'Will no one remove him? There he is; surely some one will take him away.'

"I was mentioning, to another physician, my surprise that he should have been so much distressed, if there had been many blacks in the room; for he had been waited on by them, day and night, for many years; also that the mind had not been diseased in some other respect, when he told me the names of two others—his patients—men of similar lives, who were tormented with the same fancy, and in the same way, whilst dying.

"A young female, who called the Man of Calvary her greatest friend, was, when dying, in her senses in all but one particular. 'Mother,' she would say, pointing in a certain direction, 'do you see those beautiful creatures?' Her mother would answer, 'No; there is no one there, my dear.' She would reply, 'Well, that is strange. I never saw such countenances and such attire. My eye never rested on any thing so lovely.' 'O,' says one, 'this is all *imagination,* and the *notions* of a *mind collapsing:* wherefore tell of it?' My answer is, that I am not about to dispute or to deny that it is fancy; but the fancies differ in features and in texture. Some, in their derange-

ment, call out, 'Catch me, I am sinking; hold me, I am falling.' Others say, 'Do you hear that music? O were ever notes so celestial!' This kind of notes and these classes of *fancies* belong to different classes of individuals; and *who they were,* was the item which attracted my wonder. Such things are noticed by few, and remembered by almost none; but I am inclined to believe, that if notes were kept of such cases, volumes of interest might be formed.

"My last remark here, is, that we necessarily speak somewhat in the dark of such matters, but you and I will know more shortly. Both of us will see and feel for ourselves, where we cannot be mistaken, in the course of a very few months or years." (See Nelson on Infidelity.)

The following letter was written at her father's, during the session of the Ohio conference:

"*Mount Auburn, Sept.* 2, 1846.

My dear and much loved Mrs. ——,—Seated amidst your own books and maps, and your last thankfully received and profitable letter to ma open before me, I would tell you how I have desired to welcome again your familiar handwriting to my own address, containing your fervent exhortations to my wandering heart to press with ardor on to the prize of my

high calling. Had I known, before coming home, where to direct, you would, before this, have been troubled with a communication from me, for the sole—and I own, *selfish*—purpose of the sooner enjoying one from yourself. This is, to me, a precious means of grace, which, coming from faithful friends, quickens—for a time at least—my weary pace in the heavenly road, and arouses me to renewed exertions, to make my calling sure. Were it not for this, I know not that I should have courage to overcome the embarrassment I always feel in addressing you.

"When I last heard from you, you were traveling and laboring on for the Lord; consequently enjoying the refreshing presence of that Savior to whom you have yielded yourself a living sacrifice. And you must receive encouragement in and by the way, seeing your labors blessed of the Lord, and the works of your hands prospering and established. While you say, 'Not unto us, not unto us, but unto Thy name give glory,' you must still be greatly encouraged to labor on more abundantly.

"Could I know that the Lord made use of me in awakening to conviction, in inciting to conversion, in alluring to holiness, one soul for

whom Jesus shed his blood, I often feel that faltering should never again attend my steps, or discouragement cause my hands to droop. But may-be this is only one of the devices of the father of lies. Perhaps, should I be assured that my unworthy efforts had been used in the salvation of one sinner, for future encouragement, I might, like Gideon, desire it to be repeated and diversified, *merely for a token,* in order that my future efforts might be secured; though they ought to be constantly exerted to the fullest extent of the soul's energies, were those energies a thousand-fold greater than they are; and this, even should they be like bread cast upon the waters, not to be seen until they are gathered on the great ocean of eternity. O that I had a zeal, a courage, a faith, thus to labor for Him who is worthy! These thoughts and feelings have been suggested by the close of the conference year.

"No good accomplished—no soul saved—no repentings kindled by my efforts, aided by the Holy Spirit. And now the conviction abides on my heart and conscience, How can the blind lead the blind? How can the soul having no life in itself, prove the savor of life to others?

"Our little vexations at P——, I think, are working out right. These things, I hope, have taught me a salutary lesson. I think Satan could not again rob me of my peace, in the same garb. And yet I have learned the foolishness of my heart so well, that I know that in any other form I would be as likely to yield to his devices. He never quite overthrows me, a second time, upon the same ground. Is it not strange, then, that I do not secure the armor more perfectly for new points of attack?

"This is the day for the opening of the session of the Ohio conference. I felt a great interest at the throne of grace, this morning, for that body of ministers; that the power, the peace, the spirit, and love of Christ may rest upon and abide in them; and that they may be a savor of life—a shining light in Piqua.

"I am trying to improve the privilege of your library while at home. Reading the Life of Faith, and Catherine Reynolds, has sharpened my appetite for more of the fruits of a heavenly life; and yesterday, commenced Mary Lundie Duncan, with which I am much absorbed, and hope to prove the time well employed, by being excited to imitate her efforts in gaining the image of Christ and laying her-

self out for his cause. Let me soon have some helps and encouragements from your pen. It is long since I have been so favored.

"You are still fighting and conquering in the strength of Him at whose charges you go your warfare. O may you more than conquer through Him! I think of you at so great a distance, and seem to come nearest you at a throne of grace.

"Ma intended answering directly to Iowa. Feebleness, company, and vexations with domestics, have prevented. She is still gaining some victories in the great conflict—still enjoys peace in believing; and is contending for perfect love and perfect faith. She feels—we both feel—much concern for pa, who is as much as ever engaged in the world. I wish you and Bp. H—— would join us, at least once a week, in earnest supplications to this effect: that Providence would open a way, that his business may be brought into a smaller compass, and his heart drawn to Christ anew. He has but little hope of ever being deeply engaged in spiritual things, until his business is lessened.

"Mr. S—— is growing in grace. He will be the better prepared for the work, I think, by the last year's experience. His joy is not

as great as that of many; but I believe his faith more vigorous and unwavering; and he is striving for sincerity and truth in the inward parts.

"Pray for your unworthy but affectionate

"ANGELINE."

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## CHAPTER X.

Appointment to Richmondale—Trials of moving—Prevailing sickness—Self-accusation—Sanctified affliction—Letters—To Mrs. H——To her mother—To her father—To Mrs. H——Mrs. Taylor.

A LITTLE more than two years now remained, to fill up the suffering and finish the earthly career of our beloved sister S——. During this period, it could hardly be said that she was more faithful than before in the discharge of duty. Those who have traced her history, would be ready to inquire, how could this be? And yet she evidently grew in "grace, and in the knowledge of the Lord," more steadily than before. The graces of the Spirit strengthened in her heart; and she proceeded to the performance of duty, especially the more public duties of her station, with greater confidence.

In 1846 her husband was appointed to Richmond circuit. Mrs. S—— had never coveted

stations. She instinctively shrunk from prominence and responsibility; but her sense of propriety, as well as her attachment to the *itinerant system*, forbade her objecting to any appointment, however painful it might be to her private feelings.

With reference to the less desirable portions of the work, her language was, "I may as well suffer thus as any one else." At this time, she doubtless hailed the life and labors of a circuit as a merciful deliverance from the perplexities and responsibilities of the preceding year. But it proved a period of severe trial. The parsonage was very small and inconvenient, in a little village which was extremely sickly. Thus situated, at a considerable distance from her parents, and with her husband much from home on his circuit, she suffered a severe attack of intermittent fever. As her letters furnish her own account of her condition, and of her experience during most of the year, I subjoin them, instead of further remarks. To her family she wrote as follows:

"*Richmondale, Sept.* 24, 1846.

"The fatigues of another move are about over, and we are settled for a time in this retired little dale, in our unpretending cottage,

or whatever other name you choose to bestow upon it." Then follows a history of misfortunes and losses in moving their goods; and the letter proceeds: "The house is rather more comfortable than I anticipated. We have two good-sized rooms, and a room large enough to contain a bed at the end of the porch. Then we have out-houses a plenty for storage, lumber, etc. There is a very good chapel here. The surrounding country is tolerably pleasant.

"Mr. Sears commenced his labors on the circuit yesterday—preached to two men, four women, and several children. They were not expecting him.

"It is very sickly here. Nearly half the people have fever and ague; and hooping-cough among the children. A whole family of children next to us, and almost adjoining us, are sick with hooping-cough and ague.

"I think Mary [a young woman who lived with them] was very near home-sick at first. For a day or two, we stopped at a rich farmer's, until our goods came. It was corn-cutting time. They had about twenty-five men and boys employed, and five or six hired girls; the lady of the house unwell, and two sick children to nurse. So you can fancy about the

aspect of things. And besides—what I forgot to say—the house was undergoing repair, roofing, etc. Mary asked me, the second day, if I was home-sick; from which I infer, that she was a little tinged with the disease. The people were very kind to us; and Mary seems more happy since we got into our own house, though she works at great disadvantage without the stove.

"I intend going with Mr. S——, when the buggy can go, to his appointment. And, by the way, I must tell you an exploit that I performed the other day; namely, riding on horseback, and carrying Brooks, [her little son, some two years old,] with which he was much delighted. He one day started to go and see you. We watched till he got a considerable distance down the street, still hurrying onward, when his father thought it time to go after him. He was brought back, sorely against his will.

"We have no inducements to offer to bring any of you to see us. Yes, one for the girls: a fine chance to learn to ride on horseback. There are plenty of saddles and good horses in this region; and good roads in settled weather.

"From my statement of things, as I have

seen them, you may imagine that we have not much to make us cheerful and happy. If we depend upon externals, we have not; but we have abundant sources of enjoyment, if we will avail ourselves of them: a good library—a contented mind, which, if united with godliness, is great gain. From all these, I have scarcely derived a moiety—not the thousandth part of the happiness which may be drawn from them. As to knowledge, I feel I have none. And I need but little examination to decide, that I ought scarcely to call myself a Christian; the spirit of Christianity I have in so many instances denied—indeed, in almost every instance, where a trial of patience or temper was concerned; and as to its labors, these I have refused.

"I think my being cut off from former associations will induce me to seek society in books; and I hope my reflections upon past uselessness, and ofttimes worse than uselessness, aided by the word and Spirit, may drive me to be in earnest in eternal things. I have long been aware that the graces of the Spirit can no more flourish without efforts at improvement, than the mental faculties can expand and strengthen, and the physical part of our natures be developed, without exercise.

"Brooks keeps running to me, as though he would send a message. I asked him if he wished to see grandpa, and grandma, and aunties, and Charlie. He says, '*ese, ese.*'

"Write to us as soon as you get this.

"Affectionately, "ANGELINE."

The next letter breathes, in an eminent degree, the spirit of pious submission and Christian triumph.

"*Richmondale, Oct.* 30, 1846.

MY DEAR MRS. H——,—Your very acceptable letter came to me several days since. I thank you for it. It was as cold water to my thirsty spirit—refreshing. I felt thankful for the grace you have had in your every time of need, since we parted. My soul cries, this morning, Glory, and honor, and praise are due unto thee, O Savior, for thy free, unmerited grace to sinful, vile man—to sinful, vile, polluted *me*. The minutiæ of your summer's journey and experience, would have deeply interested me; but as your time and strength would not admit, I will be content with what you have given me, and thankful for the mercy and love that have brought you through.

"I am just recovering from an attack of remittent fever, which confined me to bed eight

or ten days; but it was a blessed affliction. The Lord used it, I am sure, to attach my heart more firmly to himself. Our situation is any thing but inviting to the flesh; but I praise the Lord that it is as it is. It revealed to me more of my heart. Changing circumstances serve to teach us more of ourselves. I did not feel rebellion, but a degree of discontent would creep into my heart at times, and the tear of loneliness steal from my eye, when Mr. S—— had to be absent several days together, and I not a friend to speak to. But the current of my feelings has greatly changed, and it *must be all of grace;* for I had reasoned, and summoned all the womanly courage I could call to my aid before. But now, praised be the name of the Lord! I feel that his will is good. Yes, *good;* and he will do all things well concerning me, while I trust in him.

"When taken ill I had no consolation, and the enemy told me it was useless for such a sinner to look for any. But while reflecting on the promises, after thinking them all over, and about concluding there were none for me, the thought, 'Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief,' came and saved my spirit from despair. To it I hung.

"If the object of Christ's death was to save *sinners*, surely I am included, and I will look to him by faith. I *believe*—I *will*, I *do* believe. Then came the word, 'Say not in thy heart who shall ascend, or descend,' etc., but 'the word of faith is nigh thee in thy mouth, and in thy heart,' etc. I could not, at first, feel it; but prayer brought the realization. And then the Savior's prayer, 'Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also who shall believe on me through their word,' all, all were applied by the Spirit as I never felt them before. And now my trusting heart wonders, and adores the love, the mercy that stoops to save *me*.

"Saturday and Sabbath were blessed days to me. I was able to accompany Mr. S—— to his appointment; and while he was inquiring of the people, '*What think ye of Christ?*' I felt that he was the anointed to save, and to save me. And now I look to be saved 'to the uttermost.' I have felt naught but love—love to God and all mankind, for a week past; and the name of Jesus inspires my heart and my songs. The 'full redemption' hymns are precious and full of meaning. Praised be the Lord God of hosts! I feel while I write something of 'the *silent awe*, the *heaven of love*.' O what did

Jesus see in us—in me, that should move and constrain him to die, that I might gain eternal life, and that by simply believing on his name, and presenting it at the Father's throne as my surety! O for courage to testify of his love to all the world, and for heavenly wisdom to win souls to him! Shall my faith again fail?

'Weaker than a bruised reed,
Help I every moment need.'

"Praised be his name! with his sustaining grace and constraining love, any situation in his vineyard would be acceptable, and no fare or privations shall be counted hard. But those things which are esteemed gain to the flesh, I will gladly count but loss for Christ, if he will help me to gain one soul for his crown in the great day.

"I need not say, pray for me; I know you do; and I know not that He would have borne with all my backslidings and unbelief, had you not continued to present me to him. I thank you in the name of Jesus. I thank Him for what he has done for you and yours. I feel he will sustain you to the end.

"Mr. S—— is enjoying much of a Savior's love. I never saw him happier than when preaching last Sabbath, at eleven o'clock.

"Well, I take up much time in telling of self. You write to me of myself, and I return the same, and but little of you and yours. I cannot exhort or comfort you—I can, and do rejoice in your blessings. I would regret that you are going so far away so soon again, but for several reasons. You will have society which will be all help and all love, in sister P——. You will be aided by her counsels and her prayers. And then, as far as I am concerned, it will make no difference. We are not situated in a manner that we could ask you to visit us; neither do I expect to go home very soon, unless some affliction should call me. I expect to spend two or three weeks with C——, at P——. Go about the 20th of December. But that would be too late to see you, if you should go that way. But I can hear from you as often as your engagements and strength admit, and be thankful for the privilege.

"My little Brooks is well. He kneels at his little chair, several times a day, with his hands folded together, and performs his devotions in a whisper. I have a joyful faith that the Lord will make him his own, by an early conversion and sanctification, for out of the mouth of babes he can perfect praise. Praise

his name for the hope! Mr. S—— would be glad to be remembered, but is absent at his appointments. Shall be able to tell you more about the circuit and the work in my next. Pray for us, and we will enjoy the same privilege for you and yours.

"Affectionately, ANGELINE."

A few days later, after increased family affliction, she writes to her mother:

"*Richmondale, Nov.* 14, 1846.

"DEAR MA,—We were much gratified at receiving your letter yesterday morning, after so long expecting one. Mr. S—— and myself are just recovering from a second attack of sickness. The day I wrote to Mrs. H——, he came home with a high fever after a chill, which he took preaching in an open house—no fire, and the wind blowing on him. He has had regular *shakes* and fever ever since, till Monday; but has failed, during the time, to fill only one appointment. I have had an attack of dysentery—lasted but two or three days, but left me weak; but, thanks to our heavenly Father! we are all now tolerably well.

"We have been much blest in our light afflictions. Mr. S—— was very happy at the time. His temperament has always been so

cheerful, that I often thought, when sickness came, likely his spirits would sink, and he become desponding. But not so; he was cheerful and happy, and Saturday last, was the happiest person I ever saw.

"I praise the Lord for his goodness and mercy to me. Since I wrote Mrs. H——, I have had a settled peace—an abiding confidence in Christ as my Savior; and sins that formerly beset me have troubled me but little. Yet they, springing up, *would* trouble me, did I not keep watch. I want them all destroyed.

"If we were stripped of all beside, and had hope of salvation left—could feel ourselves embraced in the covenant of grace—could say in our hearts, 'Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ'—this would be enough to elicit gratitude and praise continually. O, to think that 'He bore our sins and carried our sorrows!'—that, if we are healed, it must be by his stripes! 'He was wounded for our transgressions; he was bruised for our iniquities,' and, having finished the work, is now our faithful High Priest and Intercessor; and for all this he only requires our hearts, and faith in his name.

"How strange that we should ever refuse to

believe on him! Here, I know, is the only rest. Reasoning and struggling with our sins is of no use. No works which we can do are of any avail, except as they are wrought in faith. I wish I understood the way more perfectly. But they that 'will do his will, shall know,' is the promise; and if I can keep my heart perfectly united to him, this promise is vouchsafed to me. I have been reading Clarke on the book of Job—found it very interesting and profitable.

I hope you will feel no anxiety for us. The sickness is generally abating through the country.

"Yours, affectionately, ANGELINE."

To the same, December 1, she says:

"DEAR MA,—Supposing you may feel some anxiety to hear of our health, etc., I write again. Mr. S—— has had another attack of ague, from which he has just recovered. The rest of us are well. Eliza met Mr. S—— at W——, according to appointment, two weeks to-day. She has spent her time thus far cheerfully, and I hope profitably—has seemed as happy as ever I saw her. We rise early. She reads before breakfast, and usually studies history some time after; then industriously plies

her needle the rest of the day. When Mr. S—— is at home, he reads to us in the evening; so she feels no want of society here. Mr. S—— has just returned from his quarterly meeting—had a very pleasant and profitable time. Harmony and peace characterize most of the societies on the circuit.

"I do not feel as well spiritually as I did when I wrote last. My opportunities for retirement are few, and I fear—I *know* I have not been watchful and prayerful enough. But I will not cast away the beginning of my confidence, but endeavor to strengthen the things that remain and are ready to die. We have an Advocate; if it were not so, we might sink into despair, for our numerous backslidings.

"I mean not to rest, and cannot, till the mind that was in Christ is planted in me. Not all the treasures of earth can compare with his love, or could compensate for the loss of it. Why, then, should trifles divert me from the steady aim to secure all the riches of his grace? Weak, frail, inconsistent mortals we are.

"I am very sorry for Mrs. W—— in her affliction, far from home, and would be for you and B—— in your confinement, but that you have the comfort of doing good to the suffering.

"Thank you for the hood; it is very pretty and comfortable. Write soon.

"Yours, affectionately, ANGELINE."

Mrs. S—— wrote to her father, December 22, the following. It is somewhat playful in spirit, doubtless designed to lessen his solicitude on her account:

"MY DEAR FATHER,—Your letter and ma's postscript I received yesterday morning, after expecting it every mail, and as often being disappointed for ten days, and as often *dissertating* on the reasons why people are not more punctual.

"Ma says, you had done wonders for you. Your pen was drawn on by the power of your eloquence upon intelligent, logical, shining ladies. I thank you for the letter, and for its unusual length. E—— has returned to P——. She appeared to feel what you said in yours, that much of her time had been lost, and that spent in novel-reading worse than lost; and resolved to be more intelligent a year hence than now. While she remained she put that resolution into practice, by spending several hours a day in study.

"I hope it will not be thought we complain of our circuit. When we came, the people were all sick. Every thing looked very gloomy;

and for two or three weeks we had scarcely a mouthful of meat or butter, and no vegetables. I wrote to the family, as ma had requested, but I did not mean to complain. We are all now well supplied with every comfort necessary for the table; and the house is now tenantable. When we came in, it leaked very much. The society has new-roofed it, and Mr. S—— has built up the chimney-back. If it were not for the ague and fevers which prevail in the country, I could contentedly stay here this year, and the year following.

"Brooks has entirely frustrated my design of adopting Mrs. Wesley's plan of teaching her children their alphabet at five years of age. He is now just half that, and is familiar with every letter. Mr. G—— sent him a pictorial, alphabetic primer, from which he has, in some way, I hardly know how, learned all but O and S, which he knew before. He repeats nearly every thing he hears, and is an adept at mischief.

"If you complained before that my letter was not addressed to you, I fear you will now complain that it is; for upon you will be inflicted the labor of reading it.

"Your affectionate ANGELINE."

The following parts of letters will close the chapter and the year, and will leave her not in a joyous state, but evidently advanced in the heavenly race, and panting for the streams of salvation:

"*March* 6, 1847.

"DEAR MRS. H——,—On referring to your letter, I am surprised to find it to be three months since its date. Nearly half that time I was absent, waiting on Caroline's sick-bed. Ports. could not afford her a nurse; so, notwithstanding my feebleness, most of the labor of her sick-room came upon me. Being much exhausted on my return, I have scarcely felt energy to write to my family.

"I rejoice that you are increasing in blessings, in faith and love, and prove that Jesus saves from sin—that he is able to save to the uttermost—that his blood cleanseth from all unrighteousness.

"Peter, and James, and John ascended the mountain with Christ, and beheld wonders which caused them to exclaim, 'It is good for us to be here;' and also to desire ever to remain and behold the glory of the Lord. After they *came down*, they forsook the Savior; and

he whose rapture on the mount was most intense, went farthest in denying him.

"How amazing such transitions of feeling and conduct! How much more amazing to see a soul redeemed, justified, tasting the joy of forgiveness, then departing! and again, having its backslidings all healed, and renewed forgiveness and grace bestowed, *repeatedly* departing, and misimproving *added* grace! Behold the goodness and long-suffering of God, in restraining the sentence, 'Cut it down!'

"I need not tell you to what guilty heart this applies. It is still 'fearful and unbelieving,' unfaithful, treacherous. Yet not without repentance, and—for which the Lord's name be praised for ever and ever!—not without some occasional gleams of hope in and through Him who alone can save. But when shall it prove that he saves in the present tense, '*to the uttermost?*'

"You will have heard before this of the death of sister Taylor. Bithia merely mentioned it. I have no particulars. Her life assures us of her last triumphs.

"Dare I ask you to write me again *soon?* I *will* say I would be glad to hear again. I told Mr. S—— I would write you while he was

absent. He said, 'Tell them I love them with a pure heart, fervently, and am struggling for the port of life,' in which joins

"Your unworthy, but affectionate

"ANGELINE."

Mrs. Taylor was a bright and shining light in Cincinnati. She lived some years in the enjoyment of full salvation, and died in great peace in the autumn of 1846. She was emphatically "a soldier of the cross." Wherever she went, and in whatever circumstances she was placed, she unflinchingly confessed Christ. Toward the close of her life, she visited her friends in a distant city, many of whom belonged to the gay circles of society. She appeared among them in her plain attire, and sought, alone, the class-room, and other means of grace unknown to them. When companies were invited to meet her, and she could not decline seeing them, her custom was to improve the occasion by recommending to them the religion of her Savior. On one occasion a gentleman of high professional pretensions took his seat at her side, and commenced a conversation about the "*truth.*" Perceiving that he was a stranger to it experimentally, she said, "Bless the Lord! *I have found the truth,* and

the truth has made me free." Her decided course procured for her the designation, "the little Methodist lady from Ohio." This appellation was not employed by way of reproach, for her consistent piety commanded their high respect.

It was the uniform custom of this sister, when there was the least delay on the opening of a love-feast, or other meeting for voluntary speaking, to rise first and give her testimony, which was always that of full sanctification to God, through faith in Jesus Christ. Referring to this habit, she said, "They know I am a soldier for Jesus." A short time before her death she was told that she had been called a bold woman. "Have I?" said she. "Well, I am glad of that, for I have prayed the Lord to make me a bold soldier."

She was the subject of frequent and powerful baptisms of the Holy Spirit in her family as well as in social meetings, and in the sanctuary. She was remarkable for perseverance in prayer, and for the exercise of that faith

"Which cannot ask in vain;"

and, of course, was accustomed to prevail with God in behalf of herself and others. As a result, she was eminently useful in laboring

with mourners at the altar, and with seekers of full salvation wherever she met them.

But nowhere did sister T—— appear more clearly in the light of a follower of Christ, than in her efforts for the salvation of the poor, to whom she devoted much time and care. As a manager of the Female Benevolent Society, she found access to their dwellings, and her ministrations to their temporal necessities opened for her avenues to their hearts. Among this class especially she manifested the wisdom that "winneth souls." The following incident, given as nearly as can be recollected, from the lips of sister T——, furnishes an example of her method and success:

"I took a basket of necessaries, and went to the residence of a sick man, who was a Universalist. Having supplied the wants of his family, and conversed with him respecting his health, I addressed him on the subject of his eternal interests. He was angry, and told me he did not wish to hear any thing on that subject. I replied, 'Why, my dear brother, I do not wish to injure, but to do you good. I love your soul; and while I minister to the wants of your dying body, I care for that also.' He still appeared offended, and I withdrew. In a few

days I returned again, with a basket of provis ions. He received it thankfully, and conversed kindly."

From that time she continued to instruct him, and to pray with him, till he was clearly converted to God. The result was, he died in the triumphs of a Gospel faith.

Much more was due to the memory of this most devoted and exemplary disciple, but my feeble pen need not attempt her eulogy, since God will take care that the "memory of the just be blessed."

"*May* 16.

"My ever dear Friend,—I have made attempts to write to you in time to reach you in New York, as you requested, but have been prevented. This morning make another effort, though quite indisposed, and scarce know why I do—having little or nothing of interest to say—except it be through the hope of soon again hearing from you.

"You say, grace is omnipotent. So you prove. Would that I could respond heartily through an experimental, present knowledge of its truth! But an *unsubdued will* cries out, 'there is one enemy it has not vanquished.' Am ashamed to say so after proving so much, and

so often, the loving-kindness of the Lord—but so it is, this treacherous heart is not yet a whole sacrifice to God. Still the Spirit strives, and leaves me not a day without conviction of the necessity of holiness, and, often, strong desires and efforts for it. Still the work is not accomplished, and my poor, sluggish spirit relapses into its native dormancy. But this story has been told you so often, I will not longer impose it upon you.

"Mr. S—— is endeavoring to 'so run as to obtain,' though he is not as joyful as he was some time ago, and has not been much encouraged in his labors during the year—that is, *sees* but little fruit. His congregations have increased considerably, but, with few exceptions, he has not heard the penitent's cry, or inquiries for the way of life. This sometimes tempts him to believe he may not be in his appointed line of duty. Pray for him on this point.

"I found Mrs. —— a firm Methodist. In speaking of Mrs. P——'s works, which she reads and circulates, she expressed a desire to become acquainted, and said she should call and seek an interview. I told her of the Tuesday afternoon meetings, hoping she would find them. I wish you would happen to meet her

there, or, rather, that Providence would so order it. She needs Methodizing externally. If *just right* in all things, her standing and influence would render her eminently useful. She told ma that she had experienced the blessing of holiness, but has not publicly professed it, save in class, and does not now enjoy its fullness. I think an association with sister P—— would open her vision on some points; and for the sake of the cause she might do much in promoting, I mention it to you, hoping you may feel a special interest, should you be in New York when she is there.

"Ma's health is improving very much. She is very *anxious to see you*. She will be nearly alone this summer. B—— expects to go east with E——. If your time and strength will permit, write soon again. Tell me when you return west, or what are your expectations in regard to it. I want to see you. Mr. S—— wishes to be remembered in Christian love to your husband, as does, also,

"Your unworthy, but affectionate

"ANGELINE."

## CHAPTER XI.

New Richmond circuit—Illness and danger—Partial recovery—Revival—Hastens to the scene—Exposure and conseqnent illness—Detained by the flood—Returns to her father's alarmingly ill—Recapitulation—Peace in believing—Entire sanctification.

In 1847 Mr. Sears was appointed to the New Richmond circuit. During the conference session, Mrs. S—— experienced a recurrence of intermittent fever, and every chill was attended with congestion of the lungs. Greatly enfeebled, she returned to her father's immediately after conference adjourned. The family physician was called, and stated that, unless she could obtain immediate relief, she would fall into decline—that a few more paroxysms would produce that result. Aware of her strong predisposition to pulmonary disease, her friends were alarmed, and the most vigorous efforts were employed to arrest the disease.

The treatment was so far successful, that early in October she accompanied her husband to his circuit, and appeared to engage in her domestic duties with her usual strength and cheerfulness. But her friends still felt apprehensive that she was not as free from disease as she thought herself to be; and as—owing to some delay in

moving—she was not entirely prepared for housekeeping, she was persuaded to return, and spend a few more weeks with her friends. At the first quarterly meeting on the circuit, a revival commenced. She received a letter from Mr. S——, giving an account of the work, and expressing the pleasure it would give him to have her present to participate in the labors and triumphs of the scene; and taking leave of her friends with great apparent cheerfulness, without the least hesitation or delay, she hastened to join him. Her ride was in a shackling omnibus, and the day was cold.

On meeting Mr. S—— she said, "I had peculiar misgivings about making the effort to come; but it has been a very happy day—one of the happiest of my life. I do not know the reason, unless because I tried to do my duty. I have had an unusual spirit of love and prayer for all with whom I have met. Even the poor beggar that I saw in the street called forth a prayer in his behalf. You know how backward I am; and what I am about to tell you may cause you surprise. A strange woman was with me in the omnibus, [the only passenger except Mrs. S——,] and I labored faithfully for the salvation of her soul. We were several hours to-

gether, and I conversed with her, and read to her all the way. She seemed much affected, even to tears, and, I think, became much interested about her soul. I had peculiar power in presenting the Savior, and an unexpected freedom in the use of the Scriptures. I think I have labored to-day in a manner somewhat becoming the wife of a Methodist minister."

That night she attended meeting, and labored with mourners at the altar, and was much blessed; but remarked, on retiring to rest, that, from shooting pains which she felt through the chest, she thought she had taken cold. In a day or two she started with her husband to a protracted meeting, at Newtown, a small village near the Ohio river. The weather proved very inclement—rain, followed by deep snow. But, feeble as she was, no persuasions could induce her to remain from the sanctuary, or to withhold her labors when there. At that meeting she pointed the mourner at the altar to the cross for the last time, and, for the last time in public, lifted up her voice in prayer for the seeker of salvation.

Before the meeting closed, the Miami river, which she must cross in returning to her father's, had become so much swollen as to be im-

passable; and though her health had suffered, and her state was alarming—and the weather also continued severe—she was compelled to proceed with her husband to his next two appointments. Her exposure was very great, riding, as she did, in a buggy, and lodging in cold rooms, without fire, while the irritation of her lungs already made respiration difficult. When she learned that the high waters would prevent her return to the city, she felt it keenly, and struggled in vain to conceal her concern; but she *strove* to manifest her accustomed cheerfulness.

On the 17th of December, she said, "This, I am convinced, is the beginning of a serious illness. I am deeply impressed that I shall never get well. About a year will finish my earthly course." These remarks were often repeated, as the violence of her symptoms increased, but with no indications of alarm.

It was not till December 24th that the waters were so far assuaged, that she could be returned to her father's. The physician was again called, and pronounced her disease acute inflammation of the lungs. From this time her recovery was regarded as doubtful; but her mind was

kept in great peace, stayed on the Lord. She often repeated, "I have peace in believing." No murmur, day after day, escaped her lips. She lay calmly waiting the will of her heavenly Father as to the issue of her affliction, but continued, occasionally, to express the conviction that she should not survive more than a year; and her hungerings and thirstings after the righteousness of entire sanctification, became more and more intense, especially when there were indications of recovery.

It was the custom in her father's house to have a family prayer meeting, daily, at noon and at night. These were seasons apart from the regular family worship, and in them all the pious of the household, and all the devout guests present, united. They were usually held in Mrs. Sears' room, were signally owned and blessed of the Lord, and highly prized by his suffering handmaid. It was just after one of these gracious seasons that she received "the second blessing," and entered the rest of faith. The following sketch we find subjoined to that from which we have extracted. It contains a brief recapitulation of her experience, and appears to have been written with especial

reference to this event. Referring to her conversion, she says:

"I continued in this joyful frame, without interruption, several days. I was soon, however, convinced that, notwithstanding my purposes, desires, and affections were changed and elevated, sin was not destroyed. Though I found my heart, in a measure, subdued, it was not perfectly so. Anger, resentment, pride, and particularly impatience, which had been an early characteristic of my temper, still retained some hold. I was not backslidden from the grace I had received; I was diligently using all the means of grace, as public worship and private prayer, and my purpose was strengthened daily to serve the Lord. I separated myself from the world in dress, spirit, and association, and so far controlled my tempers as to be able to restrain their outward manifestations.

"Yet there was a constant war within. It often seemed to me that the more vigorous were my efforts to overcome, the stronger my corruptions grew, which those more experienced in the Christian life explained to me as the teachings of the Holy Spirit, showing me the depth of the depravity of my nature."

In the early part of her religious experience, it has been stated that Mrs. S—— was diligent in reading the Bible and other religious books. Now beginning to feel,

"'Tis worse than death my God to love,
And not my God alone,"

she read with a more definite object. She was not solicitous to know with how little religion she could get to heaven, but how much of it she might enjoy on her way thither. She dreaded lest the enemies, which she found lurking within her heart, should get the entire mastery over her; and weary of the conflict, she panted for the full liberty of the children of God. Very appropriate to her were the words,

"The bondage of corruption break;
For this our spirits *groan*."

How encouraging is this thirst for righteousness! How carefully should it be cherished, and cultivated by self-denial—by earnest closet prayer—by the study of the word, and by a diligent use of the public means of grace. All these methods Mrs. S—— had applied in her own case, being, in her practice, an example of self-denial. and exercising herself in those pri-

vate and public devotional exercises, which were calculated to increase her appetite for holiness, and cause her soul to thirst after the living God. More and more did she come to feel, that a heart uncleansed is a state of bondage, and that she could not rest until her chains were broken, and her captive soul brought out of prison, and made divinely free.

She says, "I began now to search my Bible to learn whether this bondage to sin—this body of death—must continue through life. Whenever I opened its pages, I was met with commands and promises, such as, 'Be ye holy,' 'Without holiness no man shall see the Lord,' 'The oath which he sware to our father Abraham, that he would grant unto us, that we, being delivered out of the hand of our enemies, might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life.' I sought for practical illustrations of the life of holiness in such memoirs as Hester Ann Rogers, Mr. and Mrs. Fletcher, Lady Maxwell, and others. The Guide to Christian Perfection was my monthly and welcomed visitor. The experiences of Christians of different denominations there given, were invariably quickening to my heart, and as new springs of hope that I

might reach a higher state of grace, even 'rest from inbred sin.'

'With outstretched hands and streaming eyes
Oft I began to grasp the prize.'

But various, and I thought peculiar and insuperable hinderances, were in the way of my receiving. Naturally timid, shrinking from the cross, and faltering in every attempt to bear it—never venturing to call myself a child of God except when peculiarly blessed—above all, fearfully unbelieving, I passed through several seasons of seeking for this deliverance from sin, when it seemed brought so near that I needed only to stretch forth the hand of faith to receive the blessing. But my shrinking, reasoning, doubting heart as often refused to venture upon the truth of God, lest it should fail, or lest I should not have courage, if I did receive, to discharge the duty of confession, and other duties incident to so high a state. As often as I thus grieved the Holy Spirit, it seemed to me that the powers of darkness combined with the power of inbred sin to sink me into deeper gloom, and drive me farther from the Savior.

"In this vacillating state I have lived about ten years, nearly six of which I was bearing

the responsibilities of a minister's wife. And O how have my energies been crippled, and my influence circumscribed; while my example, perhaps, hindered the faith of many of my sisters, with whom I have been associated, and whom I should have led into the enjoyment of their high Gospel privileges.

"But how could I exhort others to love the Lord with all their heart, when I did not thus love him? How tell them that Jesus would save to the uttermost, when I had not proved him such a Savior? How tell them of the beauties of holiness, when my own eye of faith had not been opened to behold those beauties? O the bondage of such a state—of such a heart of unbelief!

'The more I strove against its power,
I felt its weight and guilt the more.'

I often wondered if another heart felt it as did mine; and many, many times I cried, 'If there is virtue in the Savior's blood to cleanse my evil heart of unbelief, no one need despair.'

"Last fall, as my husband entered upon the duties of a new charge, my desires for perfect conformity to God's will and word became more and more intense. In answer to prayer his work deepened in my heart, while I en-

deavored, with unwonted boldness, to recommend the Savior, and speak of his grace.

"During my recent illness, my mind was kept in great peace, leaning on Jesus for repose. Though 'the Lord hath chastened me sore, yet he hath not given me over unto death;' and as I found my health being apparently restored, I felt more desirous to consecrate myself, 'my residue of days,' to Him. One morning I awoke with the following promise upon my mind: 'Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you.' I said in my heart, 'I will try to prove this to-day, perhaps at the noonday, or evening season of prayer, which is the custom in my father's house, and which had been a peculiar blessing in my sick-room.'

"The day, with its privileges, passed without a realization of the promise offered me by the Spirit in the morning. I mentioned this to my dear sister H——, as she sat by me in the evening, speaking of the comforts of grace, and the sureness of the promises. She said, 'That was the moment you should have claimed it.'

"I mentioned other promises which had been, in former years, as vividly presented to me, but,

like it, rejected—one especially, 'All things are possible to him that believeth.' Sister H—— repeated the promise, and the Holy Spirit accompanied the repetition. I said in my heart, 'I will now venture upon this truth. I know it *is truth*, for He who is *the Truth* hath said it; and being such, it is possible for me to be sprinkled—cleansed from *all my filthiness*, and from *all my idols*.' Venturing on the promise, I was immediately blessed. A shock like electricity passed through my frame, as though the Holy Spirit would literally cleanse and heal the 'wounds, and bruises, and putrefying sores,' as Inspiration describes our moral nature infected throughout. The Spirit witnessed to the truth, while with the heart I was enabled to believe, and with the mouth to make confession in thanksgiving and praise.

"O how precious—how unspeakably precious—was He who 'was manifested to take away our sins!' How precious, as his sufferings for me were then displayed to my vision—as He at that moment gave himself *to* me, who had given himself *for* me! O the perfect simplicity of the way which unbelief had so many years made difficult!—'the shorter way,' as one emphatically calls it. It is only believe

and be cleansed—only believe and live. Praise the Lord, O my soul, for this great salvation!

"For two weeks after I received this blessing my mind was kept in perfect peace, stayed on Christ, looking momentarily to the cross. Then an occasion presented when it seemed necessary to begin more publicly to make confession, which I did tremblingly, but was afterward blessed with a day of joy—joy unspeakable. Then commenced the conflict. That 'adversary who goeth about' has not overlooked me, though I am 'a little one;' for he knows that God chooses 'the weak things' of this world to do damage to his kingdom. He knows that God can so increase strength to them that have no might—them that believe—as to render them invincible in battle against the world, the flesh, and the devil. He knows full well that if he can keep us fighting with him singly, he will triumph and secure his prey; but when we flee to the Strong for strength—when we take shelter in Jesus' wounded side—we are safe.

'Tis there I would always abide,
And never a moment depart;
Concealed in the cleft of his side,
Eternally held in his heart.'"

"*February* 20, 1848.—I have been sick since

about the middle of December—took cold at a meeting in Newtown—returned home on the 24th. On the following Tuesday the doctor was called. The beginning of this year I spent on a bed of affliction, but my Savior was with me, verifying,

'The soul that on Jesus doth lean for repose,
I will not, I will not desert to his foes.'

Though I have been afflicted, many mercies have been mingled with the cup. I was permitted to reach my father's house, where kind friends cared for me. I have been blessed with the society of my dear sister H——, and with frequent prayer and religious converse in my room.

"Though my dear Mr. S—— was obliged to be much absent from me, he has been permitted to come often, so that our separations have been short though painful. Above all these, I praise the Lord he has shown me during this sickness the way of salvation by faith, as I was never able to apprehend it before.

"I was blessed as above described on Thursday evening, January 13, 1848, after our family prayer meeting, while lying on my sick-bed, sister H—— sitting by me—Bishop H—— and our own family sitting in the room con-

versing—my dear husband absent on his circuit.

"Soon after this I wrote to sister L——, telling her of the blessings of the Lord to me. I did it with much trembling. The adversary withstood me, and many times I was on the point of desisting; but being urged on by Mrs. H——, I gave her, as explicitly as I could, the account, and it was rendered a great blessing to my own soul."

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## CHAPTER XII.

**Diary—Recognition of mercies—Letter to Mrs. L——Diary—Visit of friends—Letters to her husband—Temptations—Feebleness.**

Mrs. Sears was urged to write this account to her friend, from the conviction that testifying of the grace of Christ which she had received, would be rendered a blessing to her own soul, according to that word, "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made *unto salvation;*" and also from the assurance, that while she made her "boast in the Lord, the humble should hear thereof and be glad." In the advice thus given, there was also a reference

had to the prayer of the apostle for Philemon; namely, "That the communication of thy faith may become effectual, by the acknowledging of every good thing which is in you in Christ Jesus;" and an ardent desire that the sister to whom the letter was addressed might, through its instrumentality, be made "a partaker of like precious faith." Having written to Mrs. L——, and spoken to a few friends who had called, of the salvation she had received, Mrs. Sears experienced that "it is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord;" and the language of her heart began to be, "Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul." And soon she was enabled to add, with increased confidence and joy, "I have not hid thy righteousness within my heart; I have declared thy faithfulness and thy salvation: I have not concealed thy loving kindness and thy truth from the great congregation." She could not meet with the people of God, and proclaim his goodness in the class-room and love-feast, but she wrote an account of her experience of full salvation, which was published in the Christian Mirror, a religious monthly then issued from the press in the bounds of the Genesee conference.

The following is the letter to which reference has been made. I give it entire, except the experience just presented from her diary, a minute relation of which is written to Mrs. L—— for her encouragement:

"DEAR SISTER LOWRY,—Sister H—— kindly invites me to partake of her sheet to say a few things to you, which I do with pleasure.

"We are very thankful for the good work in brother L——'s charge, and that you are a partaker of its revivings, and abundant in its labors. I am rejoiced to hear, through sister H——, that you are seeking for a clean heart. Let not Satan, the reasonings of unbelief, the world—no, not even the Church, move you from this sacred resolve, which the Holy Spirit alone has inspired in you. I say the Holy Spirit alone, for none but he could move the heart toward even a desire for purity—for holiness.

"You will be surprised at the boldness of my exhortation, as I have been very, *very* diffident in religious things; but a late work has been wrought in me, in gratitude for which I am constrained to tell you; though Satan bids me be silent, which he has invariably, and too successfully, in reference to the blessings of

the Lord to me. But the word declares 'Whoso offereth praise, glorifieth me.' I know it is acceptable to God that we tell of *his work—his grace;* and the more unworthy the subject of it, the more that grace is exalted.

"For several years I have been struggling, more or less earnestly, to prove the Savior all-sufficient—a full Savior—a Savior from inbred sin. Disobedience and unbelief have barred his entrance to my heart. Though I knew it not, in my own strength, and by my own works, I was striving to cast out sin. But the more I strove, the more I felt its power; and O, what a power! I often doubted whether another human heart felt it as did mine; and many, many times I cried, 'If my bondage to sin is ever broken—if there is virtue in the Savior's blood sufficient to cleanse my evil heart of unbelief—none, no, not one need despair. For some time I had been unusually engaged for this blessing. His work, whose alone it is, was deepening in my heart. I had now more than usual comfort in recommending the Savior to some on our circuit, when I was seized with congestion of the lungs."

Here follows the narrative of experience; and the letter proceeds:

"My heart and lips praised; for though

'I had naught but sin to give,
Naught but love did I receive.'

I have peace in believing. O the perfect simplicity of the way! It is only, believe and be healed—only, believe and live. Let us praise the Lord for the great salvation purchased for us by the Savior's precious blood. I never felt as I now do, that every moment I need the merit of that blood. And now shall I not glorify him, in my body and spirit, which are his? I will, in the strength of his grace, endeavor to do it with my whole heart, my residue of days, though Satan and the world withstand; for greater is He that is for and in me, than all that are against me.

"My dear sister L——, bear with me. I have written much more than I intended, though with many misgivings, lest I should not say what would be profitable to you. But the theme is glorious to my heart. My dear sister, do not try by your own works to cleanse your heart. Give it to Him, *just as it is.* Do not think you must struggle long or hard; for after all you can do, you will have to come to the point of receiving Christ by a simple act of faith. Venture now. This moment believe,

and Jesus is your Savior from all sin, with his fullness of love. He came to 'save his people from their sins.' He will not disappoint your faith. Only unbelief can prevent his doing a mighty work in your heart. Obstacles numerous will present themselves why you should not now believe. Remember the poor Gentile woman, whose daughter was sore vexed with a devil. Though the Savior himself seemed to put hinderances in the way of her faith—no doubt to try it—yet she staggered not, but believed, and received the commendation, 'O woman, great is thy faith,' and also the thing which she asked, that very hour. Now receive, my sister, the perfect cure of whatsoever malady you have.

"Give our kind regards to brother L——, and tell him we rejoice in his prosperity. Mr. S—— is on his circuit. I know he would be glad to hear from brother L——. Much love to our dear sister Armstrong. My heart is drawn to write to her. We have talked much of the things of God. She has known some of my perplexities in the way. I hope she is now victorious.

"My strength will not permit my writing more. It is but my second attempt to write

since my illness. Love to sister Thurman. Tell her to believe and be saved—saved to the uttermost. Now, dear sister L——, I ask you, not for form's sake, to pray for me, that the Lord would keep me steadfast, increase my faith, and fill me with his love continually; and may you, and yours, and mine prove daily, and to the end, 'what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God' in Christ Jesus concerning us!

"I would be happy to hear from you. Please write to me, and direct to the care of Moses Brooks, Cincinnati.

"Your sister in Christ, A. B. SEARS."

The diary proceeds: "Early in the present month we were visited by brother and sister Spencer, and brother and sister Strickland—the latter, brother S——, happy in *full salvation*, received a few days before at X——. We had a happy day of prayer and praise. Two days after, several of our pious friends came out in company from the city, some of them as mourners or penitents. The whole day was spent in prayer, exhortation, and praise. One of them received peace in believing, and others seemed to be much comforted. It was a blessed season.

This was a memorable day. Mrs. Sears had recovered sufficient strength to leave her room; and the desire of her soul that others might find the way of faith which she proved to be so glorious, led her, feeble as she was, to pour forth her fervent supplications in their behalf, and to labor in conversation to point out to them the way; and as a seal to her first day's labor in this work, one was enabled to believe for justification, while she was thus engaged with her.

The two following letters to her husband give a more particular account of her spiritual exercises, for a few weeks after she had received the blessing she had so long and so earnestly sought:

"*Mt. Auburn, Friday evening, Feb.* 11, 1848.

"My Dear, Dear Husband,—Though I know the Bishop can tell you all about us, I thought it would be a little more like seeing you if I would write. You will think me improving in health, when I tell you that I went up to make Bishop and Mrs. H——e a visit in their room to-day, and then down to tea.

"Mrs. R——, Mrs. S——, and Mrs. M—— came out for prayer and encouragement this afternoon. Mrs. R—— says she must have

holiness of heart—says she is willing to give up every thing, and do every thing for Christ's sake. O that divine wisdom and grace may dwell so fully in me as to make me a nursing mother in Israel! How long I refused to receive the full salvation of Christ, fearing I might be called to do something in his vineyard! Now I am willing to do any thing, if he will bestow the wisdom and the grace. I want to feel more and more fully his words, 'Without me, ye can do nothing.' I do feel it, but I want to realize its full meaning.

"Brother and sister D—— and sister F—— spent yesterday with us. We enjoyed their society—were very glad to see them. I thought perhaps we might have had some reliance upon them, as being so full of faith. It was a day of powerful temptation to me. The great enemy followed me every moment, with every harassing suggestion fitted to close my mouth from praying in the presence of others; and if I had been as I once was, he would have succeeded in getting a resolution that I never would again attempt it. He could not touch my faith in a present Savior; so he took me upon that score. I laid myself as low as I could in self-abhorring and self-abasement before the Lord, will-

ing to do or not do, according to his will, if he pleased to give me utterance or not. Then I said to the tempter, 'I'll take up the cross when it is laid upon me, in the strength of grace, in spite of you.' To be content to be little—nothing—is a difficult lesson; but, then, alone can Christ be all in all.

"I will not take back my burden of guilt, which he has removed, but I wish to cultivate a deep, abiding

'Sensibility of sin,
A pain to feel it near;'

and avoid, in all things, the least appearance of evil. Sometimes I feel such a sense of the purity of God, as to wonder what heart can abide the searchings of his Spirit, which is 'a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.'

'But let us sit beneath his cross,
And gladly catch the healing stream;'

for this, and this alone, 'can make the foulest clean.' Praise the Lord, O my soul! I feel to-night this blood avails for me. Faith, simple faith, brings his blood's availing plea into my heart. I retired last night under the distressing temptation I have mentioned, but awoke some

time in the course of the night with these words:

'Jesus, the all-restoring word,'

which gave me much comfort.

"I am not much changed to the observation of others, but to myself there is indeed a mighty change—one which only Omnipotent grace could have effected. What! my unbelieving, fearful, disobedient heart, that could never dare to cast a look of faith to the cross, lest it should meet a repulse, now delighting to lie before it, gazing upon its expiring victim, claiming the virtue of His blood as it flows down into my poor, worthless soul; and, as I hear him cry, 'It is finished,' realizing that the wounds which sin hath made there are all healed. The tempter says it is too much to be true, but my Savior says, 'All things are possible to him that believeth;' and when he said 'I will *sprinkle*, and will *cleanse* you from *all* your filthiness and from all your idols, I took his word, believed, and, in spite of the enemy, I *will* say, was cleansed. But the accuser says I was not aware how deep the wounds of sin were. Well, the Savior's piercing eye could penetrate their depth, and he will not heal the hurt of the daughter of his people slightly. He would be an unskillful physician, indeed,

who could but half cure his patient, and leave him to manage himself as best he might.

"*Saturday morning.*—I found it was between ten and eleven o'clock when I had written the above. In looking over it, I find great incoherency of expression; but *you* can understand. Had a sweet time in prayer this morning before day. I cast my helpless soul on Jesus, that he may save me this day from sin. O that I may watch and pray! Hope you will be greatly blessed in your meeting—that yourself and ministering brethren may be baptized afresh, perishing souls snatched from eternal wrath, and the brethren built up in holiness. Watch, my dear, as well as pray—be humble and full of faith. Let us think little of ourselves, but much of Christ. The more our minds dwell upon his character, the more our hearts shall be made like him. Preach with as keen a sense of God's scrutinizing eye upon you as you can. Forget, if possible, the presence of those about you, except to minister to the wants of their souls. I would be glad to be with you, but, as Providence orders it otherwise, do not indulge a wish. *His 'will* be done!'

"Pray much for your affectionate

"ANGELINE."

"*Mount Auburn, Feb.* 17, 1848.

"My Dear Husband,—I am very thankful for the prosperity of your meeting, and equally so for that of your own soul.

"My heart seems shut up to a naked, obstinate, and not very vigorous faith to-day—suggestions of every kind thrown into my mind, such as, 'Now you are finely committed before the world, and if you continue to profess that you have received the great blessing, it will be only for pride's sake; and you'll find yourself mistaken in the end;' and many others of like character. But I think they cannot come from the Holy Spirit, for he certainly never chides them for whom Christ died, for *believing on* him, or for acknowledging what they believe he has wrought. I therefore conclude that they are from the *accuser*—the devourer, and look up, and by faith claim Him as my Savior still. If the devil cannot destroy our souls, or our hope, he next tries to retard us in the race, by trying to keep our eye turned away from Jesus, and looking back to the things which are behind; for he well knows that while we are looking back, we cannot successfully press forward. O for a divine energy and ardor to run, diligently, the race set before me, 'looking unto Jesus!'

"For two weeks after I received that blessing, I was kept in perfect peace. Then my joy became more full, and then came the conflict—then commenced the warfare. But, thank the Lord! I fight not at my own charges. I have a Captain who never lost a battle, and who will never suffer me to be overcome, or defeated, while I believingly obey his word. O let us constantly and unwaveringly cleave to Him! He will never leave nor forsake us. His hand is ever stretched out for our help. His strength is our strength, and can never fail. Let us forsake all in this world, for Him who forsook the heavenly world for us—let us sacrifice freely to Him who sacrificed himself for us; or, rather, should we not say, let naught be *counted* a sacrifice—let our language be,

'Too much to thee I cannot give;
Too much I cannot do for thee;
Let *all* thy *love* and all thy grief
Graven on my heart for ever be!'

Then all we can do for or give to Him, will be but rendering back his own. Such views, my dear, if heartily entertained, will support you in your toils and trials. The work of winning souls, or building up believers, will become more easy and delightful.

"Mrs. —— is anxious that I should write my experience for Dr. L——'s periodical. I have been, for a day or two, attempting, as my strength permits, to do something toward it, which may be a reason why the devil besieges me with such force. The suggestion is, that I am sufficiently committed before the world, without blazing abroad in print. But this is pointless, as the name will not be given. I do not know that I shall be able to write any thing she will think suitable to send. Shall leave it to her entirely.

"How does your meeting at Olive Branch progress? The Bishop thought the prospects very cheering. I pray daily for brother G—— [Mr. Sears' colleague] and yourself, and sister G—— also; especially that *you two* may be harmonious, faithful, successful laborers in the great cause. Yes, the *great cause!* O how my heart swells while I think of its magnitude! O let nothing *weaken* your efforts! Immortal souls, and the honor of Christ's kingdom, just so far as your influence extends, are at stake. I am ashamed and grieved that I have not felt it so in reference to us both since we have been professed laborers in the Lord's vineyard, and that I do not feel it with greater power now.

Lord give us a more solemn and abiding sense of the importance of *eternal things*—of the worth of souls—of the heinousness of sin—of what it cost the Son of God to redeem us! Keep us faithful to thee, blessed Savior!

"Since I wrote you last, have been threatened with the prevailing influenza. These sudden changes affect my lungs very sensibly. Can scarcely leave my room without feeling the worse.

"When you go to Laurel, give my love to the friends. Tell sisters Gasner and Nichols that I want their prayers, and tell them to *believe* and be *saved*. Love to sisters Pease and Boden.

"The Lord bless my dear husband, and fill him with all the fullness of his infinite, boundless love, prays

"Your affectionate ANGELINE."

"*Thursday, P. M.*—P. S. Write often till you come. I did not send my letter this morning, thinking I might find something more to say. Nothing, but that I am trying to hold the beginning of my confidence steadfast.

'Here only is my hope, my joy, my rest!'

"My cough grows less, but I can't bear exposure.

"Good-bye, my love. A."

## CHAPTER XIII.

Change in experience—Diary—Attends church—Increased feebleness—Departure of friends—Diary—Temptations—Letters—To Mrs. H.—To her husband—To Mrs. Rev. C. B.

During a large portion of the remainder of her life, Mrs. Sears might be said to be "in all things more than conqueror." But conquest implies conflict; and that she had a full share is shown by the following extracts from her diary—which she kept for a few weeks after writing the foregoing sketch—and letters, which we shall continue to give at length, as the best exposition of her experience, till within a few weeks of her death.

It will be seen that, though these letters contain occasional expressions of doubt and despondency, yet, on the whole, they indicate an improved state of grace—a faith in Christ, which rendered her comparatively "steadfast and unmovable!" She did not view herself as less unworthy, but more so. She did not lose sight of the evil of sin, but saw it, more than ever, in a light to be abhorred. But, with these clearer views of self and sin, she had, also, clearer views of Christ and his atonement; and with a stronger faith, such as she had

never before experienced, she took such a hold of him, as her Prophet, Priest, and King, that she could say, in the language of a sanctified mother in Israel, "All the merit, and strength, and peace, and joy, and life of Christ, are mine."

This is what we mean by "entire sanctification." It is not that we think less of sin, but more of Christ; not that we deem ourselves, by nature, less guilty or depraved, but that we behold, in the atoning blood, infinite merit, and in the agency which is to apply that blood, *Omnipotence.* So that we may always say,

"O Love, thou bottomless abyss!
My sins are swallowed up in thee;
Covered is my unrighteousness,
Nor spot of guilt remains on me;
While Jesus' blood, through earth and skies,
Mercy, free, boundless mercy, cries!"

"*February* 21.—Since I was enabled to testify that the blood of Jesus cleanseth from all sin, I have enjoyed, much of the time, great peace; some of the time, much joy: but, for the last two weeks, have suffered much conflict, and many temptations—the fiery darts of the enemy. Sometimes he suggests that that which I took for cleansing from sin was delusion; but then I look up to Jesus, and believing, find the witness in myself. Then he says I will find

myself mistaken in the end. Then I say, 'I will trust Jesus for that.' Then, in our seasons of social prayer, he tempts me that I want to make a fervent prayer, or a great prayer; or, that I did try, and *no one was benefited*. Thus he vexes and harasses all who try to serve God. If he cannot destroy their souls, or their hope in Christ, he tries to retard them in 'the race,' knowing that while he can keep them looking back, or at themselves, they cannot rapidly and successfully run forward.

"This morning, had but a dull season in secret prayer. The enemy kept close by with his evil suggestions—tempted that the old man was just ready to rise up in all his native depravity. I felt a little shrinking from the cross, but the Lord sent me timely aid. At our noonday season of prayer, I felt the presence of Jesus lifting up my sinking head, strengthening my faith, and confirming my hope *in Him*.

"*February* 29.—Health very feeble—much weakness and pain in the chest; but surrounded and sustained by mercy and love. Last Sabbath, had the privilege of going to church with Bishop and Mrs. H——. Bishop H—— preached to the German brethren, from John xv, 5. My soul has been incited to be more

closely united to Jesus—to receive, every moment, the sustaining life. Partook, with the Germans, the symbols of the broken body and shed blood of the Redeemer, and was enabled to feed upon him in my heart, by faith, with thanksgiving.

"Returned from church much fatigued, but experienced a great blessing in the afternoon, in secret prayer.

"My dear Mr. S—— came on Monday; left yesterday. These frequent separations are painful; but he is about his Lord's work. I freely give him up, with myself, a sacrifice to God. Jesus sacrificed *himself* for me, and shall I not 'freely sacrifice to him,' and for his sake? Yes, my adorable Savior, take husband, child, friends, and life—only gather us all together, in thy heavenly kingdom, at last, when thou makest up thy jewels.

"Felt very feeble this morning, but my trust is in 'the Lord, from whom cometh my help!' I praise the Lord that Jesus himself said, 'Whosoever believeth in me shall not perish, but have everlasting life.' O, help me more fully to 'know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent;' for this is 'life eternal.'

"*March* 10.—Have been too feeble to write for some time. Our intercourse with our dear friends, Bishop and Mrs. H——, closed yesterday, for the present, and perhaps for ever. It was a solemn day to me, and would have been sad and sorrowful, without grace to cheer me. My dear husband left also in the morning, for his circuit, for two weeks—a great trial to himself, as well as to me, as he leaves me in so feeble a state of health. But I must not repine. The Lord calls. He must be about his Father's business. The Lord be with him, making him successful in calling sinners to repentance!

"My faith has been feeble for several days, and, I feared, almost ready to fail. Have had a weeping and heart-cheering season of devotion this morning. Sometimes I am almost overcome with grief—and would be quite, without the supports of grace—at the prospects of declining health, and leaving my husband and child. I must not love them better than the will of my heavenly Father. O give me a joyful acquiescence in all thy holy will!

"Sometimes am greatly afflicted by the suggestion that I have been deceived in all my experience, and that grace will not be given

sufficient for me in the trying hour, and that I shall not be able to glorify my Savior in death; that the sting of death, and the victory of the grave, shall overcome me at last. If this depend upon any good in me, I may well despair; but it is not by our works of righteousness, but by his own mercy, he saveth us. 'I will trust, and not be afraid.' Thou hast said, 'My grace shall be sufficient.' O fill me with faith, and the Holy Spirit, that I may suffer or do all thy gracious will, and receive, joyfully, whatever thou dost appoint!

"Our dear friends —— have been with us near three months. They have been a great blessing to us all—have helped us to bear our burdens, and strengthened our hands—have been helpers of our faith. My poor, unworthy soul has been much encouraged by prayer and conversation. The season of communion face to face has closed with me—may never be renewed on earth; but O, my Savior, gather all, at last, in thy kingdom!"

The following note, received the day after the above entry was made, is so characteristic—so true to the heart of Mrs. S——, that I trust no apology for giving it entire will be necessary. At this date, she could only walk from room to

room; yet the kindness of her nature, and her habitual regard for the interest of all around her, led her to seek a window where she could watch the baggage of a friend who was departing, and see that no neglect was practiced by the "carrier."

"My Dear, Dear Sister H——,—Sad, solitary and lonely would yesterday have been, had not one Friend remained who alone can compensate the loss of all others; and it came near proving such to me, in spite of faith clinging to Him who 'sticketh closer than a brother.' I feel the absence of my dear husband doubly, as you are not now here to step in and break and cheer the loneliness of my room, and encourage my weak, fainting soul. Ma came home yesterday—I had like to have said—sad at your departure, and said she should not have felt worse to have parted with her own sister. But the throne of grace is still accessible to us; and though a great gap is made in the domestic circle which surrounds it, yet Jesus sits there, reaching out his sceptre of mercy to us. I need not say you are presented there. Last evening pa came home in a comfortable state of mind, and we had a good season in

prayer—a pleasant time this noonday also Jesus is precious.

"Did you receive your baggage safely? I looked out at ma's window to see that all was put on; and saw that your traveling bag was not safe, and threw a string to tie it.

"I feel better to-day—no cough of consequence, or pain in the chest—some soreness in the side.

"We are confident we shall not be forgotten at the throne. May all the riches of grace be yours in Christ Jesus! I feel like trusting him for all, though the enemy says many things to the contrary. Ma sends love.

"Your unworthy ANGELINE."

"*March* 17.—Have had great feebleness of body since I last wrote. On Sabbath the distress in my chest and shoulder was so great, that I thought a few weeks must waste me to the grave. The cruel enemy of my soul greatly perplexes me also, in my weakness, with suggestions that grace will not be given. But a word of comfort came. I was saying, 'O Jesus, if thou dost forsake me!' When I had spoken thus far, the promise was applied to my heart, 'I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.'

"On Monday my mother was reading to me some of the letters of H. A. Rogers, in which she gives an account of the healing of one of her children of a weakness in its limbs, in answer to prayer. I ventured silently to cast my case before the Lord, and asked him to relieve the pain in my chest; and if it is his will, restore me to health, with grace to live to his glory, and win souls to Christ. I have been getting better for the last three days—have rode out every day, which many would say is the cause. Perhaps the Lord means to use the pure atmosphere as the instrument of restoring my strength. I will live to him while I live, by his grace.

"Yesterday spent in the city with my sisters. Their hearts are at enmity with God. I saw no opportunity for benefiting their souls, and had no conveniences for prayer, except to keep my heart lifted up as I could. I felt solemn, and kept a serious countenance. I cannot compromise with the world, and am satisfied, if the Lord give me grace to feel and act right, to have my feelings and acts misconstrued. The Savior forewarned his disciples of this. He experienced it himself, and the disciple must not be 'above his Lord.'

"This morning I hunger and thirst after righteousness—try to claim the promise to be 'filled.'"

The following appears to have been written the evening of the same day:

"The Lord met us at our noon prayer, and filled ma with his love to overflowing. My own poor heart felt it good to wait upon the Lord. I was blessed also in writing to sister M——n, and again at the female prayer meeting at brother Strickland's—had a good number present, and Jesus in the midst.

"Feel some concern. My dear husband has been gone a week, and I hear nothing from him. Lord, keep him safely—fill him with thy love—make him wise to win souls, for thy name's sake!"

"*March* 18.—Had a comforting letter from my dear husband last evening. He writes of sinners being converted. Praise the Lord! This intelligence quite reconciles me to his absence, painful as it is to my feelings. If he can but work for the Lord, and see his work prosper, I am satisfied. My strength increases, for which I am thankful. Had the pleasure of meeting the children of God in the sanctuary. Brother J. Trimble preached from, 'I know

whom I have believed,' etc. The word was precious to my hungry soul. I felt 'that the Lord is faithful,' and is indeed 'able to keep that which I have committed into his hands.'

"This day, quarterly meeting at Ninth-street. May a great outpouring of the Spirit be felt there, and many sinners be brought to Christ!

"I feel like cleaving closer to my blessed Savior. O that I could perfectly reflect his image!"

The letters from which the following extracts are taken also bear date March 17 and 18:

"DEAR, DEAR MRS. H——,—Thank you for your solicitude about my health. I seldom think of its being of any consequence to any but my husband and child. You ask how I bore the cold ride. Well, and felt better—have been down every day since—am stronger, and have less pain. Doctor saw me this week, and begins to think my lungs are not affected; but, between us, I have but little confidence in this. But no matter; my case is in better hands than his. The Savior spoke to me the other day. I was saying, 'O Jesus, if *thou* forsake me!' He said, 'I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.' It came into my poor, worthless heart as sensibly as if a voice had uttered

it, thus lifting up a standard against the horrifying suggestions of the enemy, that in declining health and death I should not be able to glorify God, but should be deserted.

"I feel some spirit of praise this morning; and O, how should praise fill my heart and dwell upon my tongue, beholding Jesus bleed *for me!* O, why is not my heart more alive to his sufferings in my behalf? My language is this morning,

'Too much to thee I cannot give;
Too much I cannot do for thee;
Let all thy love and all thy grief
Graven on my heart for ever be!'

*All his grief?* Can I apprehend as much of it as one nail inflicted? or as the most trivial sin—if any sin can be called such—occasioned? Then how should my heart break to think of my sins, like a mountain, rising above the skies! But all he asks in return is my heart, and that shall be for ever his. I praise him for his grace—his love; but must know more of it—hunger and thirst for more. I want to 'rise to all the life of God.'

"I can't tell you how we feel your absence. I believe ma never contracted such a friendship; and I am not jealous to think it exceeds

her love to me, for it is meet. We shall all be glad to see you back very soon; and have almost hoped that some providence would turn your faces this way again before you get far away. We comfort ourselves that we are not forgotten in prayer, and pray that every good thing the Savior purchased for you, may be yours every moment.

"Am still feeble, and writing hurts me; so must say, pray for your unworthy

"ANGELINE."

"DEAREST HUSBAND,—I have just received and read your letter. Have felt rather uneasy about you for a day or two, not hearing from you, and to-day looked for you home. I think I never felt our separation more keenly than now; and am only reconciled by the thought that you are doing service for the Savior. I try to feel as sister Bishop Janes did, when she said, with reference to her husband's long absence, and her feeble health, 'O it is so sweet to know that he is working for the Lord.'

"I think my health is a little better than when you left—am stronger. Had a miserable day last Sabbath; much pain in the chest, and general weakness; and the enemy seemed to have received fresh power to torture me. I

was cast down, but, praise the Lord! 'not destroyed' Monday morning, cold as it was, rode to the city and back; felt much refreshed, and my strength has been increasing. Have rode every day.

"The doctor did not examine my chest, but said he thought my lungs were not affected. I asked him what occasioned the pain in my breast and shoulders. He said he thought it neuralgia. I do not know. Some days I feel like getting well, and others as though a few months would finish my course on earth. I try to leave my cause in my heavenly Father's hands. He will do all things well. My husband and child lie very near my heart; but God could comfort and sustain one, and take care of the other, if he sees fit to remove me. If not, I hope to live to glorify Him; and, if he will so honor me, to win souls to Christ. But, O my dear, let us get grace enough to say, with cheerful, joyful acquiescence, 'Nevertheless, thy will be done.'

"I felt compensated for the trial of your absence when I read, in yours, that sinners were converted at the meeting. Praise the Lord, O my soul! I think much, and pray much for New Richmond, and for those lately converted,

especially for A—— E——, when I think she is the daughter of a Methodist preacher, and what a struggle it must have cost her parents to give up their children in a dying hour, and how they must have cast them upon the Lord. O that she may never depart from the Lord—may never measure back her steps to earth again—never lose a sense of the Divine favor; but go on as it is her high and glorious privilege, from strength to strength, and from grace to grace!

"My dear, I am thankful that you are trying to get a more intimate union with Christ. So am I. I feel it is all that's worth a thought beneath. O to 'rise in all the life of God'—to be privileged to labor for him! What hath he done for us! Years of suffering and sorrow, want and woe, wound up by the agonies of the garden, and the cross, *for us!* O that my heart could be every moment alive to these truths! I am glad, my dear husband, that you are a Methodist itinerant. May you be a faithful one! You or I need not covet any thing better in this life, so we are faithful in such a calling. Be watchful, prayerful, faithful—in private intercourse solemn—realize that you are all the while exerting an influence.

"To-morrow is quarterly meeting at Ninth-street. If pleasant, I mean to try to go.

"I would be very glad to see you next week—feel it a great while till week after; but if you cannot come conveniently, or only to stay a day, think you had better not try; but write as often as you can."

The last entry in her diary is dated March 22d, and reads thus:

"Feeble in body; but my strength has increased for the last week. Have enjoyed a precious day with sisters F—— and P—— to-day. The Lord was present at our noon prayers. This afternoon also had female prayer meeting here. Present, in addition to those mentioned, several other dear friends from the city. We each bore our cross in testifying for our Savior. I felt that mine was a blundering testimony, but thank the Lord that I had strength to give it at all. All now gone to meeting but myself; but it is precious—precious to draw the living water from the living Fountain. O how Jesus shines out in his own word! I wonder not that he prayed, 'Father, sanctify them through thy truth: thy *word is truth*.' O that my poor, dark soul may prove all its light and power!

"Sixth chapter of St. John's Gospel was my evening lesson. Was struck with the 21st verse, 'Then they willingly received him into the ship: and immediately the ship was at the land whither they went.' O how long have I toiled and rowed to overcome the rough sea of my nature, and it seemed that the harder I labored the farther I found myself from shore! But when I opened my heart to receive Jesus, immediately I gained

'The land of rest from inbred sin;'

for Jesus brought me to the haven of rest—rest in him. Praise the Lord for his precious, immutable promises! He says, in the same chapter, 'This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom he hath sent.' O help me, Lord, fully to believe, that I may receive all the fullness of thy love! I feel this evening 'that the word is nigh' me; yea, in my mouth and in my heart. O may it ever dwell there! Let every lineament of thine image, blessed Jesus, be fully impressed on my soul! Let it fully shine forth in all my life—in all my acts, words, and thoughts! Let the Divine impress shine from my very countenance!

"My little Brooks is very unwell to-night—I give him up to the Lord."

The following letter to her beloved friend,

Mrs. Rev. C. Brooks, contains some repetitions in regard to her experience; but as these form but a small part of the letter, and are interspersed with other remarks, I venture to give it almost entire.

"*Mount Auburn, March* 10, 1848.

"My Dear Mary,—I cannot tell you how surprised, glad, and thankful I was, when Mr. S—— handed me your thrice welcome letter, of 1st inst. I have *many, many* times desired a renewal of our correspondence, but for some time had despaired of its being brought about, as I knew your cares were thickening upon you; upon which consideration I have tried to reconcile myself, but often with a bad grace.

"*March* 20.—You see from the first date that my will was good to send you an early reply; but I was so feeble, that writing even a short letter injured me; so I had to defer. My strength has very much increased in the last week—had fine weather for riding, which I improved daily, and with great benefit. It is just three months since I was taken ill. Now I cough but little, and have but little pain in my chest and side. My friends, generally, and the doctor too, I believe, thought me in consumption; and sometimes I have thought my-

self so. But, though I have been afflicted, it has been in so much mercy, that I feel thankful for it. All the circumstances of it were in mercy and love; being at home, and surrounded by praying ones, which made my sick-room a constant bethel.

"I must tell my dear Mary some of the Lord's dealings with me. It would be ungrateful not to speak of *His work;* and I hope it may encourage you, for you know I have always been more, much more fearful and unbelieving than yourself. You know I have been in an almost unbroken bondage for years.

"As we went to a new charge last fall, I was very anxious to be made more useful, and was led to pray for perfect conformity to the will and word of God—for which I had been striving, at intervals, for years—and was realizing a deepening of his work in my heart; and, as a means, began more boldly than ever before to take up crosses, from which I had been always shrinking.

"When taken ill my mind was kept calm and peaceful; and the lines,

> 'The soul that on Jesus doth lean for repose,
> I will not, I will not desert to his foes,'

expressed my calmness and confidence. As

disease began to give way, and there seemed a probability of restoration to health, I felt a greater anxiety to be cleansed from sin—to present my body 'a living sacrifice,' and prove the 'good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God.'

"One morning I awoke with the promise, 'I will sprinkle clean water upon you,' etc., very strongly impressed upon my mind. I said, 'I will try and prove this mine to-day; perhaps at our noonday prayers'—which has been the custom of the house this winter—but was diverted from the point of looking for it *now*, all day. In the evening Mrs. H—— was sitting by my bed, telling me of the comfortable exercises of grace in her heart—the rest of the family and Bishop H—— by the fire conversing. I told her of my morning promise, and spoke of another text which was presented me several years ago, but like it neglected: 'All things are possible to him that believeth.' She said, 'You should have claimed the promise this morning—the moment it was given;' and then she repeated, 'All things are possible,' etc. The Spirit applied the repetition to my heart. I said within myself, 'This is a divine truth. He who is THE TRUTH hath said it; and being such, it is possible for me to be sprinkled—

cleansed; and I will—*do now* venture upon the truth which *cannot fail*.' I was immediately blessed, and began vocally to praise the Lord. A thrill—I may say a *shock*—passed over my frame, almost like electricity; as if the Spirit would make a literal application of the cleansing blood, to purge and heal the 'wounds and bruises,' etc., with which my moral nature was infected. The Savior's sufferings *for me* were displayed with a vividness such as I had never realized before; and O how precious was he to my heart as he gave himself *to me*, who had given himself *for* me!

"For two weeks my mind was kept in perfect peace. Satan would suggest that I was entirely deceived; but I found it *very* easy to look to the cross, and claim my suffering, dying Savior, as mine from sin. Then, as circumstances seemed to render it necessary for me to confess his grace, I did it, though with trembling, and found my soul blessed and strengthened in so doing. Then I had a season of joy; and then came, and continues, the conflict. But 'the just shall live by faith.' *By faith!* What a shield by which we may quench all the fiery darts of the enemy! My dear Mary, I have learned—as I think Mr. Fletcher says—that

one act of faith is worth more than years of struggling without it; for I have spent years of inquiry, anxiety, and striving, and fitting myself, and yet never gained the point, until I ventured, just as I was, upon the promise of God. I have been all the time since, with two or three exceptions, deprived of the outward means of grace; but I have the precious word of life, and the closet, and family prayer meetings; and often prove that, 'to them that have no might, he increaseth strength.' The devil tries his arts to destroy; but I know that He who is faithful, is also 'able to keep that which I have committed unto him.' And now, I am resolved to spend my added days, and what strength he gives, in his service, and to try, at last, to win souls to Christ. I have never been a helper to my husband in this respect—always shrinking and fearful. O, what a dark, heavy list of omissions, as of the reverse, must have been laid up against me! Now, my dear Mary, I want you to pray much, that I may be very, very courageous—that I may be

'Bold to take up, firm to sustain
The consecrated cross.'

"And now, dear Mary, may I say *to you*, 'Fear not, only believe.' Believe, and live.

Believe, and be saved. Let the dark cloud of Satan's reasonings be dispersed by the bright rays of the 'Sun of righteousness!' O, why should we fear and shrink, when Jesus hath died for us; and as long as it is written, 'Whosoever believeth in Him shall not perish, but have everlasting life!' Praise the Lord for this precious truth! O, how long I have read the Bible, without realizing that it was truth, and emanated from THE TRUTH! how I have gained but a drop from the full ocean!

"I have written all this, as connected with myself, not with a desire to exalt self. No: saying I am saved is saying I was lost. I would ever keep this in mind, and tell the work of grace, as far as self is concerned, as though accomplished in another, and I think I can.

"You know sister ———, and have probably heard of the work in her. It is truly wonderful. In her case the teachings of the Spirit have been very rapid, and, if faithful, she will be a very bright Bible Christian. Many, from her former vacillations, prophesy that it will be only a morning cloud; but we hope not.

"You say you fear you will not raise your little O———. Let me say, do not fear, but freely give her up to the Lord. O, it seems

if I had a dozen children, I could yield them to Him. Since my health failed, the thought of leaving my child has been more painful than any other; and next to that, the thought of leaving my husband. If they are all taken, don't repine; but, rather—I had almost said—rejoice. Think of the evil in the world—their exposures and hazards; and then, if you should be called, I know grace could be sufficient; but if Providence sees fit to transplant them to paradise first, give a joyful acquiescence. I think I could, tenderly as I love mine, and would have indulged the wish, had I not felt it would be wrong.

"I would be very glad to see you and yours. I would come, but for an anticipated journey to western New York, with Mr. S——, this spring. Pa and ma think it would improve my health much more to go by private conveyance, which we would do, but for the want of time. If we should, we will come by Columbus. Write to me, if you can, very soon, and tell me—as freely as I have you—all your exercises in religion; and pray much for your unworthy friend, ANGELINE B. SEARS."

## CHAPTER XIV.

Visit to Oxford—Letter to Mrs. H.—Increase of faith—Journey—Steady decline—Return—Letter to Mrs. H.—Goes to Brownsville—Letters—To her husband—To her father—To Mrs. H.—Hope of recovery abandoned—A victory—Returns home.

For what remains of the history of Mrs. Sears, I shall rely principally upon the few letters she was able to write, and upon information derived from her husband's diary kept at the time, the use of which he has kindly proffered. These we shall find replete with efforts to maintain the fight of faith, and with expressions of triumph in seasons of victory, as well as proofs of self-sacrificing fidelity to her friends, and calm submission to her heavenly Father's will.

The first of April we find her able to ride, and just returned from a short excursion, taken as an experiment, to test the propriety of a summer's journey. Her state of mind and habits of thought are clearly indicated by the following letter:

"*Mt. Auburn, Saturday morning, April* 1, 1848.

"Dear Mrs. H——,—Your letter came Thursday evening last, during my absence. Returned from Oxford yesterday. Ma would

have written, but waited my return. To-day business calls her from home; I improve the time to write. And where shall I begin to tell of some of His wonderful works? Mr. S—— returned Monday—for the first time since you left—burdened with good news. At Concord the Lord worked with power. Mr. S—— was very unwell—had no help, except one evening. The meeting lasted nine days, and, in the time, fifty conversions, and thirty-four accessions to the Church. He had to close the meeting, to go to another.

"At Laurel there was at first little faith on the part of the Church, but that little increased, and an astonishing work broke out. Near a hundred were added, the major part, they think, converted; and several received the witness of holiness, in a powerful manner—sister N——, and a number of other dear friends in Christ, some of whom, if I should mention them, you may very probably be familiar with. Mr. S—— was gone from me near three weeks. It was a trial; but when he wrote that sinners were coming to Christ, I rejoiced, and felt that I could freely forego his society, while the work required his absence.

"Yesterday we had a visit from brother and

sister H——r, and two or three other dear friends. At the noon prayer meeting, sister H——r received the witness of entire consecration, while leading in prayer. All were blessed. Sister R—— is going on—I think, is taught of the Lord—in a wonderful manner. The day she was here was her fast, and she only came for brother and sister H——r's accommodation; but she promptly bore the cross—went to the table for the benefit of the text, [it was the custom of the family to repeat passages of Scripture at meals,] but ate nothing. B—— was at home, which made it heavier for her.

"We went to Oxford on Wednesday. Found the Lord at work there in the conviction of sinners—the altar surrounded, every night and day, with penitents, but few conversions. Sister P—— is enjoying daily communion with God.

"We returned by Hamilton. My faith was increased by sister B——'s conversation. She has enjoyed the witness of holiness most of the time for thirty years. Talks like one who lives near the throne.

"I wrote a long, very bold letter to M—— B——, much too bold for the adversary, who told me many things about it; but the Lord witnessed that I did it as one way of bearing the

cross, and praising his name and grace. I am very glad that sister D—— has been aided to believe for full salvation.

"My Savior supports, strengthens, cheers me. The accuser does all he can to destroy; and, no doubt, often triumphs in the expectation of success; but, by grace, I will hold fast to what is written, 'Whosoever believeth on Him shall not perish, but have everlasting life.' O, I cannot express the comfort I derive from that passage alone. It is a bulwark against the thousand and hourly attacks of the destroyer. And then, when I know that, in addition, defenses are raised at all points surrounding me—I had almost said, like a wall of fire—my comforts grow stronger still. I never felt my perfect weakness, vileness, and entire want of every thing good *in me*, more than at this moment; but Jesus died for me, and I will trust him, and do praise him. My heart doth praise, and my lips, too, as well as they can. While 'my heart and my flesh fail,' I claim, through Jesus, 'God, as the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever.' The suggestion still comes forcibly, that grace will not be given, and I shall find myself deceived in the end. But I pray the Lord, if it comes from

him, to show me. I do not see that I can do more than to believe and trust him; and I have confidence that I shall not be confounded. Praise his holy name, I do feel comfortable this morning, in saying, 'Thy will be done!'

"Brooks has been quite sick, with a cold on his lungs. I thought perhaps the Lord would take him; and, though nature felt more than I had anticipated, I had a cheerful resignation. He is now better—running about.

"When shall we see you back? We desire to join you again in our noonday and evening devotions. We often find our strength renewed in them. O, what a privilege is prayer, much as it is slighted! Is there a sinner so far lost to its value, as to be willing to stipulate never to pray? A universe would be nothing in exchange.

"Ma sends much love to you both. She is still going onward and upward. We pray for, and rejoice in, your success in laboring for the Lord. Write to us, and pray for us. Brooks says, 'Write a kiss to sister H—— *for me.*'

"Your unworthy ANGELINE."

On the 4th of May the anticipated summer s journey was commenced. Mrs. S—— traveled

as far north as Montreal; thence across to Burlington, Vt.; thence to New York city, where she spent several days, and seemed somewhat strengthened in body, and much refreshed in spirit. From New York she returned west by Buffalo, visiting Vienna, the scene of her husband's first itinerant labors, where many painfully pleasing recollections were awakened. Up to this date the condition of Mrs. S—— had been such as to inspire in the heart of her husband alternate hope and despair respecting her recovery. At times the fresh air and the presence of friends would so inspirit her, that she seemed returning to life; but again that deadly ague, which had so long followed her, would light upon her with renewed violence, and she would appear hurried to the mouth of the grave. On the whole there was a steady decline. Disease was preying upon the vitals, and sapping the foundations of life.

Of this part of the journey Mr. Sears says: "From Buffalo we went to Chatauque county, to spend a few weeks with my friends; but I saw that my dear wife was so evidently sinking, that it was proper I should shorten my visit. The chill and fever followed her every day,

with constant and shooting pains through the chest. We had a painful parting with my dear friends. They loved her with uncommon affection; and they now took the parting hand, deeply impressed that they should see her face no more.

"About the last of June we arrived in Cincinnati, with no real change for the better. Indeed, she had all the while declined in flesh and strength.

"During a great portion of this long journey Mrs. S—— was compelled to lie down in the steamboats and railroad cars. Her state of mind was that of patience and resignation. When, after an encouraging interval, a relapse occurred, she gave no indication of murmuring. But from the time that we began this journey, I discovered a letting go of that faith which had held her in such delightful communion with God. Of this she often conversed with feelings of deep regret. There were, however, periods of much comfort, especially while in the city of New York, enjoying religious converse with sister P—— and sister S——, at whose house we found a home."

The effort to be made ready for a long journey, in her feeble state, tasked Mrs. S—— se-

verely; and after starting, her seasons of private devotion were interrupted, and she was deprived of the social prayers which she had daily enjoyed in her father's house; and worn by the fatigues of the way, what wonder if the accuser, renewing his attacks, should to some extent prevail against her? But that she did not so far yield as to cast away her confidence, and that her heart continued to find its own element wherever she met with those that dwelt in a spiritual atmosphere, is evident from the following letter. It is the language of a sincere, tempted, perplexed soul:

"*Mt. Auburn, July* 17, 1848.

"Dear Mrs. ——,—Your letter to ma and myself was received some days since, for which we thank you, and that the more heartily, knowing some of your obstacles in the way of writing. We return thanks to Him for and through whom you work, for the prosperity of your abundant labors in the Lord—thankful also for the degree of health you are both enjoying, in the midst of travel, anxiety, and fatigue.

"I did receive yours at Jamestown, and this is the first pen I have lifted since. We traveled over two thousand miles without much

benefit physically, and I fear—yes, I fear—*less spiritually.* I met with Christians *alive* at different points, by intercourse with whom my spirit was quickened; but O, if I write as I *feel,* I must call myself backslidden. And yet I cannot bear the thought that the light—the divine light so lately enjoyed—is so soon extinguished. Though convinced of sin and unfaithfulness, I will not utterly cast away my confidence, and yet often fear I have. Sometimes I try to get near the cross, and pleading the promises, my soul gathers a little strength and peace; and then like a tide I am overwhelmed with accusations.

"But I hear your exhortation: 'Believe—only believe. Fly back to the blood again, which makes the wounded whole.' This, this alone I can and must do. I need not say, help me by your prayers.

"Geneva friends desired to be affectionately remembered to you. We had a pleasant interview with brother S——y's family, and with brother T—— at B——. Since our return, Mr. S—— received a cheering letter from brother T——. He seems fully alive to the cause of entire holiness—says he is for ever committed to this doctrine of Methodism and

of the Bible, and cannot and will not go back; but intimates sore trials in that behalf.

"*Tuesday morning, July* 18.—My soul struggling to get beneath the cross,

'Without one plea,
Save that his blood was shed for me.'

I read this morning, 'They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick.' Surely none can answer this description better than myself. Sick? Yes, body and soul. I look to Jesus to heal me.

"May the Bishop and yourself be sustained, and blessed more and more in your labors! Write us again, when you can.

"Your unworthy but affectionate

"ANGELINE."

All hope of relief from ordinary remedies was now abandoned; and, as a last resort, Mrs. S—— was taken to Brownsville, Pa., to test the hydropathic treatment in use there. In reference to this effort, Mr. S—— says:

"I find in her an ardent desire to do all she can to recover health. Her parting with her little son was affecting. It is for me and him that she wishes to live, and she separates from us with much reluctance. I have hardly ever seen her soul so broken up. Her usual fortitude

gave way. No doubt the thought passed in her mind that she might be looking upon him for the last time."

On the way to Brownsville she suffered much from weakness and pain. After an examination of the case by the physicians there, Mr. S—— left her, to return to his field of labor. Of their separation he observes: "I was astonished that she would consent at all to be left in a land of strangers, without husband, child, or relatives. It was almost Spartan heroism—nay, it was more—it was Christian resignation."

On the 29th of August he received a letter from her, saying that she felt perfect resignation to all the will of God—that she had given up husband, and child, and all, all to him. We here insert parts of the last letters she wrote. They show more definitely her experience while at Brownsville. The first is addressed to her youngest sister just before her marriage, and refers to that event. Some parts are omitted, and a few words supplied where the allusion was obscure:

"You wish to know how it is with me. Some of my symptoms are improved—night sweats less—pulse somewhat better—those painful attacks at my heart less frequent—

strength gaining a little—appetite good—too good. I am accosted on all sides with, 'Mrs. S——, you look better.' I sometimes reply, 'It is because you are used to looking at me.' I shall probably have returns of chills, which will retard my improvement. The doctor is very cautious not to give stronger treatment than I can bear.

"I fear, even if I continue to improve, that I shall not be so far well as to be able to return home by the 7th of October, as two or three weeks then may be very important. And yet, could I bear the thought of my last and 'little sister' entering a new life without my witnessing it? My mind recurs to her first efforts to creep, and to the first time her infant step tottered from the wall to pa across the room. Many scenes of childhood's glee and childhood's sorrows—and of school-girl's perplexities and emulations—come freshly up in association with this 'little one;' and not least of all, the sparkle of that huge black eye, and the glow which lighted the countenance, as lines were traced from the pen of one dearer than all other friends—the friend of her *heart.* I am glad, my dear B——, that you are so happy; but perhaps E——'s suggestion may

not be premature. Yet no doubt the enthusiasm of such a period of your life will yield to a more mature and reasonable affection and respect.

"You speak of gratitude and love toward all around, springing forth from your heart like a new emotion. That is but a faint type of the *Christian's* heart, as it is freshly imbued with the greatest of all graces from the throne of Love. But, alas! through the influence of a downward, earthward tendency, how very imperfectly is this heavenly affection displayed in the lives of many who call themselves by that holy name—Christian! And here shame—deep *shame*—envelops me. I have nothing to say but to acknowledge my sin, and fly to that blood which makes the foulest clean. This is the only sacrifice.

"I had feared that Mr. L—— is too poetically speculative about religion. But the Holy Spirit has not yet enlightened his mind and his *heart.* When that comes to pass, he will approve the saying of the great, good Wesley, in reference to pulpit labors: 'I would no more dare to preach a fine sermon than I would dare to wear a fine coat;' and if *imbued* with the true spirit, like those who faithfully follow Wesley, he

himself would go out into the 'highways and hedges,' or even pioneer the wilderness, if here and there he could find a soul for whom Christ died, that would welcome the word—the bread of life. [These words seem almost prophetic; for Mr. L—— has already gone, and is now a messenger of grace to dying souls.]

"My dear little Brooks! I have not forgotten *him* in this long scrawl. I am very much pleased with the improvement his aunt reports—hope it may continue, and that he will always remember to pray for his *sick mother.*"

"*Brownsville, September,* 1848.

"My Dear Mrs. H——,—I have been waiting to feel like writing you a long letter. That I am forbidden to do; so I will say only what my strength will permit. I feel a little better this morning than for the last week, but don't know that I am radically so—doctor thinks there is a slight improvement in my pulse; and my fever does not last as long as it did a few days ago. Pa says, 'Write every other day.' But what can I say? No changes occur in so short a time, which would be certain indications of my state; and the doctor does not expect any rapid improvement; besides, in hydropathy, fluctuations of feeling are constant until

a decided convalescence appears. So much for the poor body.

"I am trying to rest my soul on Christ. Here is all my hope; and yet fears come in like a flood, at times disturbing my peace. I have no stated seasons of prayer—can only try to uplift the heart, and place my trust in Him wherever I am. I am troubled that I am doing nothing, and here is a field. Can my faith be a true one? I do not want to cry peace to my soul, and find that peace false at last. But I venture sometimes to praise Him for the hope of salvation. O for perfect faith, obedience, and resignation! You are still enjoying and suffering. May He—*he will*—enable you to do all his will!

"Mr. and Mrs. M—— are still here—seem pleased with hydropathy. Her society is a green spot in the waste—have no Christian intercourse. It is of no use to say I wish I could see you. I bow to the appointments of Providence. Write me when you can. Remembrances to the Bishop.

"Your unworthy

"ANGELINE.

"P. S. Received pa's letter this morning. Thank him for me."

"*Brownsville, Monday, Sept.* 18, 1848.

"My Dear Father,—The inclosed was written by Dr. Mason, the assistant physician of Dr. Baelz. He has examined my chest several times. Dr. B—— also, on Saturday afternoon, gave it a thorough examination. At my request he wrote. I thought he would give you a clearer understanding of my state than I could, and you would know how far to hope for my cure. I have felt for a week or two that my recovery is doubtful—indeed, that it could scarcely be expected—yet know that I am not capable of judging of my symptoms. The physicians think it still quite worth while to continue the treatment. They say that hepatization will give way if the system can be strengthened. I don't know that my cough is worse or better—do not think I raise quite as much as I did some weeks ago—can go up stairs with a little less shortness of breath—sleep tolerably well—weighed two weeks ago eighty-six and a half pounds—several were weighed, and thought the steelyards were not correct; but I know I have not gained. The fever seems now to be getting lighter—comes on later, is not so high, nor lasts as long. The physicians were very

thorough in their examination. As regards the result, I think I can leave it entirely in the hands of Him who, I know, cannot err, and whom I can trust for grace in every conflict; and hope my friends can all feel the same. A few years at most will end the scene; and what matters it whether soon or late, if the soul is but prepared for a change? I hope nothing through or of myself, but trust in Christ. I think Mr. S—— had better take his appointment, [her opinion had been asked in reference to Mr. Sears taking work for the coming year,] and let Providence open the way, day by day, should I fail. I cannot consent to his giving up his work. I think you had better withhold this from the family until Bithia leaves. I fear they may feel unhappy about it. The carrier waits, and I must close. Love to all.

"Your affectionate daughter,

"ANGELINE."

"*Brownsville, September* 19, 1848.

"MY DEAR HUSBAND,—Your dear, kind letter of the 15th inst. I received on Saturday. Have written to pa since the result of the two doctors' last examination. I hope it has not made you unhappy. I cannot see any thing favorable in my case at present, but rather

judge most of my symptoms against recovery. Have regular fever, which comes on from 11 to 1 o'clock, though for the last three days it has neither been so high nor lasted so long. My night-sweats are not so troublesome as before I left home; pulse from one hundred to one hundred and thirty; don't know that there is much difference in my cough or expectoration. I give you a faithful account, not wishing to flatter you, or raise expectations which may never be realized. Yet the physicians encourage me to remain, hoping to manage the fever, and then the *hepatization* of the lungs. I will remain until you come from conference; and then, unless there is a decided improvement, think I had better return with you. But that we will leave, and all things else, with Providence.

"I feel, as regards the result, more confidence and resignation than I ever have. God can and will sustain, if we trust in him. I hope you are ready to say, 'Thy will be done!' He will provide for you and for our dear little Brooks. The trial, the struggle, has been great; but I hope it is accomplished. I am not so clear about the certainty of my salvation as I wish to be; yet my helpless soul hangs on the merits

of Christ alone—and here I rest, looking for clearer manifestations as he sees fit to give them. He has promised not to forsake me, and I believe his word, unworthy though I am, and in the greatest degree. Go to conference and take your appointment. [Mr. S—— had suggested to her that he had better be left without an appointment.] If you *can*, come and see me, and then I think Providence will manifest his design; and if I continue to fail, your presiding elder can supply your place. Be cheerful—be happy. Let us go to the cross and there lose our wills, and then it will be easy to give up friends and all. Love to all.

"Your affectionate wife,

"ANGELINE.

"P. S. Let us give up all things for time and for eternity."

"*Brownsville, Monday, September* 25, 1848.

"MY DEAR HUSBAND,—Since I last wrote I have gradually, but slowly, improved in some particulars. My pulse is a little better. Before I rose this morning it was reduced to eighty-two; but when the fever comes on in the afternoon, it rises to a hundred and ten or fifteen. The doctor says if he can get it reduced to ninety, there will be no difficulty. The fever

lasts a much shorter time, and does not rise so high.

"I feel quite resigned to my heavenly Father's will concerning me. I trust in Jesus, though some days I have to live wholly by naked faith. I praise him for the grace given, and think I can trust him for *all things*. The trial of giving up husband and child I hope is over. A crucifixion of my will had to be passed through. I shrink not from suffering, if he please to call me thereto. I find it blessed to yield every wish into his hands. I try to speak of his grace daily to those around, as opportunity offers. Praise his holy name! he has not forsaken me, nor his mercy failed. Jesus is my hope, and if I am called, he will go with me through the 'valley and shadow of death,' which he himself has made even delightful to the believer. Satan whispers often, 'You are deceived, and will be forsaken at last;' but I trust *that* to the Author of my salvation, who has pledged his word. I hope you can say, with a glad heart, 'Thy will be done!' Whatever he does will be right.

"Be faithful at conference. Unless the river rises, I don't know as you had better come.

"Mr. and Mrs. M—— leave this week. I

am sorry to lose her, but resign this also. Ex cuse the bad writing and my brevity—doctor says I must not write much at a time.

"Write soon, and long, to your affectionate wife."

From the period referred to in the above letters, a wonderful change was manifest in her state of mind. For months before leaving home, she could not look upon her little son without tears; and after she reached Brownsville, she stated, that when she awoke in the night and thought of her husband and child, in spite of her efforts to suppress emotion, her face would be suffused with tears. Her affection for her family was strong and absorbing; and her husband justly remarks, that "nothing less than omnipotent grace could have enabled her thus cheerfully to resign them." But this grace was operative in her soul, and this yielding up was final. Except in regard to their conversion and sanctification, she never had another anxious care for any of her friends. This great change, in which her heart so strangely unclasped itself from the dearest objects of her affection, cannot be seen by others in the strong light under which it appeared to herself and her friends, who knew the strength of her attachments,

and saw how, like another new creation, they were dissolved by an almost miraculous power. From that time she seemed separated from all of earth, and the days of her mourning were ended.

On her return home she met friend after friend in turn, and even her husband and child, with her own cheerful, affectionate smile, but with no expressions of fondness calculated to call back the affections which she had now centred in heaven. Nor did she encourage any of us to approach her in a manner calculated to do this. There was a moral grandeur in her appearance, which impressed the beholder with feelings of awe, and checked the twining sympathy which had ever been so congenial to her spirit. She would not willingly permit us to weep in her presence, without giving the assurance that we wept not for sorrow. At her first meeting with her husband, observing that he was deeply afflicted, she affectionately requested him to appear more cheerful; and afterward said, "You wrote to me at Brownsville that you could say, 'The will of the Lord be done;' now, be sure to carry it out!" She made no allusions to past scenes and circumstances, and scarcely noticed if we adverted to them.

When inquired of by her husband, some weeks after her return home, how long it had been since she wept, she replied, "Not since the period at Brownsville, when, in answer to prayer, I felt the spirit of entire submission stealing upon me gently as the dew of heaven. All at once then the struggle was over, and I felt that I could freely give up husband, child, and all." She added, "I was not without my fears, that when I returned, and saw you and our dear little Brooks, the feelings of the past would return; but, in answer to prayer, I feel the same resignation."

It is not the office of our holy religion to destroy natural affection, but to chasten it. At the first glance, it might have appeared that Mrs. S—— had acquired an unenviable state of heart in regard to her family and friends—that her love for them was wholly chilled. But a little communion with her showed that her bearing toward us was dictated by resolute Christian prudence. It proceeded from no want of love, but from a sense of duty to herself, lest her heart should relapse, and should be weaned again from heavenly things, and her strength be weakened in the way. With respect to the interests and happiness of all

around her, she manifested all her former kindness and vigilance. When a friend remarked to her, "You still take care for us all," she replied, "I never loved human beings as I now do."

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## CHAPTER XV.

First interview—Remarkable change—Sacrament of the Lord's supper—Disposition of her wardrobe—Conversations—Entire resignation—Life of faith—A baptism—Temptation—Deliverance—Arrival of a friend—Answer to prayer—Continual triumph—Conversion of a brother-in-law and sister—Sacramental scene—Departure of friends—Conversion of a second sister—Simplicity of faith—Last sister converted—The close.

At my first interview with her after her return from Brownsville, I could not avoid being deeply affected at the change I witnessed in her. I could scarcely recognize her as my long-loved, cherished friend. She was exceedingly reduced in flesh. But there was also *another* change. The power of religion had gained over her a dominion which disclosed itself marvelously to the beholder. Christ's all-conquering grace seemed to beam forth in every feature, and show itself in every word and act. Her pale yet expressive countenance, thus lighted up, reminded one of Moses when he descended from the mount. Nor was it in

the least doubtful that she, too, had met and communed with God. Her spirit was putting on the strength of immortality, and she seemed almost like an inhabitant of another world. "I have very little joy," she said, smiling; "but I have the word of God; and I have such confidence in it, that, should he call me to die without any special manifestation, I think I should not fear."

When asked, "How did you enter into this state of rest in God?" she replied, "When I perceived by the countenance and manner of my physician that he was assured I could not recover, I just lifted my eyes to heaven for aid, and instantly I felt a divine influence descend gently upon me, like distilling dew." It was at that moment that her heart yielded up husband, child, friends, and *all alike*, to her heavenly Father.

On another occasion, when I was seated by her, and her husband also was present, she said, "My dear husband is pained at my entire separation from earthly things, [referring more especially to her chastened manner toward him,] but I tell him I wish him to think of me as though I were not." I said, "You wish that God may be all in all." "That is

it," she replied, "*that is it.* I do not fear suffering," she said; "I do not fear *death.* I can say, 'the will of the Lord be done.'"

A few days after, she desired to receive the sacrament of the Lord's supper. While the service was being performed, she sat in quiet meditation and devotion, though some of the company could neither suppress nor conceal their deep feeling. After the service closed, she suggested that the thanksgiving, offered up in her behalf, implied too much; but said the occasion had been a blessing to her. Before separating, we had a season of conversation and prayer. As Mr. H—— inquired of all present concerning their religious states, she spoke with great confidence, and said, "Jesus is precious—I have peace with God—I can trust him for all that's to come. The fear of death has been taken away."

She made all her outward preparations to die with as much composure as though she were going to spend a week with a friend. There was not the excitement usually manifested by those who are preparing for a long journey, but it was like the calm, every-day manner of doing what is a mere matter of course.

October 13th she employed much of the

day in distributing among her friends little tokens of her love, and gave directions respecting the disposal of her wardrobe; directing that all which she had not otherwise appropriated, should be given to the poor. Her only gift to her little son, was a neat copy of the Bible, in which she marked many passages, with a request that he might learn them. Afterward she proceeded to hold a conversation with her husband, of which he says:

"This day my wife has given me some very profitable advice as to the future. She has, in great kindness, told me of some faults with an earnest desire that I may be in all things a pattern of piety. How ardent are her wishes that I may live and do good! How exalted her views of Christian propriety!—how alive is she to every thing that may mar the symmetry of ministerial character! How much shall I miss her advice and watchful friendship! Her judgment is nearly always according to truth. Few persons seem to me possessed of her discrimination and her delicacy of feeling. In our conversation she suggested that she did not wish her friends to weep around her dying bed. 'Rather,' said she, 'let them shout and sing for joy, if that were proper.'"

October 14th she remarked, "If the question of my recovery were left to me, I would refer it back again to God." Her husband asked if she had any directions to give respecting her funeral. She replied, "I leave all that to the family. I wish nothing may be said in my praise, but let every thing be in the most unostentatious manner."

Mr. S—— said, "I trust your death will be made a blessing to your unconverted sisters." She replied, "I have often thought that the prayers of a sainted mother would avail, and they be saved. Those prayers have availed wonderfully in *my* behalf; for in the midst of all my heart wanderings and unfaithfulness, the Spirit of God has been near to reprove, and draw me back. As my mother seemed to be to me, so I may be permitted to be a ministering spirit to you."

*October* 17.—After a season of conversation and prayer with her husband, she exclaimed, "O, God is love, to save such a sinner as I am!" Mr. S—— asked if she had any pleasing anticipations of seeing her Christian friends in heaven. "Yes," she answered, "if one so unworthy may be permitted to get a sight of them. I have thought much of seeing

my dear mother and sister Taylor, but especially of beholding my Savior."

On the 21st she said to her husband, "Why do you and pa pray for me as the '*afflicted one*' of the family? I am not afflicted. The Lord has been very good, and saved me from much suffering." She also requested, that, when praying with her alone, Mr. S—— would not refer to their past life, fearing the effect that calling up these recollections might produce on her heart.

*October* 28.—After dozing in her chair, she suddenly roused, and seeing her husband beside her, said, "You will probably ornament the grave-yard [meaning the family lot in it] with some shrubbery, the coming spring. What made me think of it was, I was just dreaming that you came in with some evergreens, and I said, 'You have obtained those for my grave.'"

For some time after she returned from Brownsville, she appeared anxious to visit the cemetery, and see the spot where her body was to repose. Mr. S—— writes: "It seems as though she wished to exhibit her complete triumph over the enemy that had given her so much solicitude, and more especially for the

following reason: A little before going to B——, she was one day riding by the cemetery with her mother, aunt, and little son. Her aunt expressed a desire to enter, and look upon the grave of a beloved sister. A slight effort was made to get the gate open, but Mrs. S—— discouraged their going in. After they reached home, she told her mother that she did so because she felt such a shrinking from the grave that she did not wish to see the place where she was to be buried.

"But now how changed! The gloom was dissipated—the sting was gone. She was anxious to visit the dominions of death, and there, amid the thickly scattered monuments of his power, in calm and holy triumph, bid him do his utmost. So perfect was her victory, that she said to her sisters, shortly after her return from B——, 'I can think of the clods rattling upon my coffin, and it makes me happy.' The feeling that prompted her to desire to go to the cemetery, seemed to be something like the martyr's, who, by the power of grace, held his hand in the fire till it was consumed, because, under the influence of fear, he had, a few days before, signed with that hand his recantation. She wished to proclaim in the face of death,

and in the very place of her former intimidation, her present victory."

*October* 30.—She was heard, early in the morning, to repeat several verses, commencing with, "Praise the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits."

During the month of November she continued to sink gradually, and evidently drew nearer to God in spirit, while she more and more earnestly desired to depart and be with Christ; sometimes saying, with a smile, "I'm almost home." Early in the month she visited the dining-room regularly at meals. When she could no longer do that, she walked into the parlor every morning to attend family worship, which she greatly enjoyed. When she could no longer *walk* out of her room—which was on the first floor—she was moved in a chair into the parlor for prayers. Her last attendance was on the morning of November 30th. For some days previous, her friends had looked for her departure, and many who had called to see her, had repeatedly taken, as they supposed, a final farewell. Up to this date she had remained in a peaceful state, with a calm, settled confidence in God. She adhered closely to his word, and trusted not to frames and feelings.

This may account for her general power over temptation—continued more than two months, during which time, it might be said,

"Not a *wave* of trouble rolled
Across her peaceful breast."

But though she seemed ripe for heaven, it proved that she had much to suffer, as well as much to enjoy on earth.

The reader may have noticed that a remarkable feature of Mrs. Sears' exercises, from the time she received so great a blessing at Brownsville, was her *strong faith.* She often repeated, "I have but little joy; but I have the word of God; and I have such confidence in it, that, if called to die without any peculiar manifestations, I think I should not fear." This, in one so prone to unbelief, shadowed forth to those who had known her a great change, and a remarkable progress in faith. Hers was not a mere speculative belief of the Scriptures as the word of God; but a taking hold of it with the *heart,* and claiming and appropriating all that each promise secured to her. Was not hers very much like the faith of Abraham, who "believed God," and who was "strong in faith, giving glory to him?" And was it not a rea-

sonable faith? It is written, "He that believeth not God, hath made him a liar, because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son." But where do we find what God says, or the record that he hath given of his Son, unless it be in the Bible? In ancient times God spoke to men with an audible voice, and by the prophets and angelic messengers. But this he is not wont to do since the New Testament was added to the sacred canon. The blessed Redeemer said to the Jews, "Had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me, for he wrote of me. But if ye believe not *his writings*, how shall ye believe *my words?*" Referring to the transfiguration, where the visible glory of Christ had overwhelmed the beholders, and a voice from heaven had proclaimed him the Son of God, Peter says, "And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount. We have also a *more sure word of* PROPHECY; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts: knowing this first, that no prophecy of the Scriptures is of any private interpretation. For

the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."

But how few believe, with the *heart*, the *whole Bible!* How few of all the professed believers in "the true God, and in Jesus Christ, whom he hath sent," believe every "great and precious promise"—not in general, but in particular; not speculatively, but appropriatingly! Do not a great many, even of us who have experienced regenerating grace, live so far from God, that we cannot even see his promises in the light of faith? How few, even of his disciples, can say, in the language of our excellent hymn,

"Faith, mighty faith, *the promise sees,*
And looks to *that alone;*
Laughs at impossibilities,
And cries, It shall be done!"

And yet how heinous is the sin of unbelief! Moses only once, in all his toilsome journeyings with rebellious Israel, seems to have been guilty of not believing God; and for this he was forbidden to enter the promised land. For it is recorded, (Numbers xx, 12,) "And the Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron, *Because ye believed me not,* to sanctify me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore ye shall not

bring this congregation into the land which I have given them."

Mr. Fletcher says, "Christ is in the promise· hold the promise, and you hold Christ." Mrs. Sears proved this saying true. She went calmly forward toward the waters of Jordan, leaning on the word, and relying on the truth of God. She had proved that his word is truth—sanctifying truth; and now she was willing, enabled by grace, to enter the dark valley of death, relying on the same blessed assurance. But, as when Abraham's faith and faithfulness were fully tested, the Lord said, "Now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me," and removed the trial; so, before she entered the cold stream, such a glory shone upon her soul, as enabled her to pass over in the clear light of heaven.

On the morning of November 30 she rose as usual, though with difficulty, and was drawn in her chair into the parlor, to join in family worship.

About ten o'clock she suddenly felt herself sinking, and supposed she was dying. "For a moment," she said, "I felt a shrinking, but it was only for a moment. I looked to the Savior,

and it was gone." Then followed a scene of remarkable triumph and transport. We will give some of her remarks during this wonderful—I had almost said, "*transfiguration*"—scene, but cannot, perhaps, give them in the exact order of their utterance, for the most of them are supplied by the recollections of the members of the family, a part only being taken down at the time; and, while witnessing a scene so affecting, it is not to be supposed that any one would charge the memory with the words in their exact order.

While the apartment seemed filled with the Divine presence, among other things, she said, "Glory to God in the highest! A few moments ago I was all filled with pain, but now it is all gone. I feel well. I am filled with the love of God, which I feel all through me. This is no delusion. There are no angels in the room, but Jesus is here. Precious, precious Savior! Glory! glory! O ma, praise him! Let all praise him! O, what manifestations I have of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost! I cannot describe them. No language is adequate. But O how glorious! glorious! unspeakably glorious!"

Looking at her mother, who was kneeling

beside her bed, she said, "O ma, praise him for his love! Do not weep." Her mother said, "I do not weep because I am grieved, but for joy that you are so blessed—that Jesus is so precious." She replied, "O ma, we have prayed together, wept together, rejoiced together, and we shall meet in heaven! O, you have been so good to me, unworthy as I have been! You have been every thing to me that an own mother could have been—yes, more indulgent!" Then turning to her youngest sister, almost frantic with grief, she said, "Do not weep; but give your heart to Jesus, and serve him. O, prepare yourself for such a scene as this! O, give your heart to God! Prepare to die. Jesus can make you happy; yes, happy when dying. Do not think me beside myself; my mind was never clearer. I do not see angels around me, but the room is filled with glory. God is here—Jesus is here—the Holy Ghost is here! O, I am so filled with God that I don't feel my poor body! A little while ago I was all weakness and pain, but it is all gone now. I feel well—strong. Glory! glory! I have such visions of heaven! Indescribable! O, I am so baptized into God!"

Her countenance now beamed with an unearthly radiance; and her words were uttered with a peculiar force, which is lost in recording them. She said, "Jesus is a Rock—*a Rock!* What on earth is firmer than a rock? Hence he is said to be 'a Rock.' 'As the mountaing are round about Jerusalem,' so is he round about me. He has redeemed me. How wonderful that I should be saved! *Saved!* washed from my sins in His blood! I! I! How wonderful! O, praise the Lord! O that the world might come to him! his arms of love would embrace them all! But they will not—will not; *they will not!*

"My mind was never so clear. Sin never looked so hateful to me; the plan of salva tion was never so clear. O, it seems to me I could convince the skeptic. Jesus, *my* Savior! *mine!* how wonderful! The precious promises of God are crowding on my mind—how full of meaning! I never felt for sinners as I now do. O the preciousness of grace for them! Yet they will not come to Jesus, that they might have life! O, his infinite love would embrace a world of sinners, but they *will not* come." Those words, "will not," were uttered with great force.

Thus she continued for more than an hour, conversing in almost unearthly strains, and earnestly desiring to see her father, but especially her husband, both of whom, being absent, had been sent for, but had not arrived. She said, "O that my dear husband were here to see how happy I am! I know he would be willing to give me up. He has looked so sad for several days; but could he see me now, I am sure he would be willing." Her friends expressing an apprehension that she would not live till he arrived, she said, "The hour is not yet—I shall not die now."

About half-past twelve o'clock, Mr. S—— arrived. On his entering her room, she exclaimed, "O, my dear husband, how the Lord has blessed me! You have no conception how he has filled me with his love. Such shocks of *power, power, power!* Now it comes again. Now I feel it through every avenue of my poor body. This room has been filled with heaven. I no longer felt my poor, suffering body. Though these bones have been aching for days, it is all gone. I feel that I hardly touch my bed. O, how precious is Jesus! Yes, Jesus is precious—*precious!* There is such a meaning in that word precious!"

Pausing a moment, she again broke out in expressions of wondering love: "Can it be possible that the Savior will so bless me! *me*—one so unworthy—one who has been so doubting—so full of imperfections! O, how precious is the word of God—the promises of the Bible! true—all true! I have but to trust—trust—trust. Yes, that is the word—*trust.* I never before so appreciated its meaning. I *trust* in the word of God. It is a rock—a rock—that is the thing—*a rock.* What is firmer than a rock? and yet 'the everlasting hills may be destroyed,' but 'the word of the Lord endureth for ever.' Glory! glory!

"I never before had such views of sin. O, how awful does it appear! But the blood of Christ can wash it all away.

"I have had such views also of a Savior's love for a lost world. O, how willing to save the sinner! How easily could he save the whole world, if they would trust in him! O, my dear husband, try to have a sense of the worth of the soul—try to love sinners more. Preachers do not love sinners half enough. How much more good they might do, if they could realize the love of God for a lost world!"

About this time Mr. Brooks arrived, bringing

with him Mrs. F——, to whom Mrs. Sears was ardently attached. When they entered she exclaimed, "O pa, I thought I would have died before you could come! I am glad you are here. The Lord has blessed me so—Jesus is so precious!" Then turning to sister F——; "O, sister F——, you don't know how happy I am! I never thought there were such blessings for me. Yes, for *me*—one so unworthy. You know how doubting I have been; but now the Lord has taken away all my fears."

After a short pause she looked up and said, "My mind was never so clear. I am not afraid to die.

'Jesus can make a dying bed
Feel soft as downy pillows are.'

I have always thought those lines a poetic fiction—

'Soft as downy pillows are.

How true—every word true! It is no fancy of the poet, but a glorious reality. My poor body suffered much this morning, but Jesus put his everlasting arms underneath me, and my bed became as a downy pillow. I seemed to rise. All pain was gone. How wonderful!

Death has lost his sting—the grave its gloom Jesus has sweetened the grave."

Her sisters and their husbands coming in, she said, "Come, my sisters, come to Jesus. Give your hearts to him, and meet me in heaven. O, if you knew the joy I feel, you would give worlds for it; and yet this vain world allures you from Jesus. Consent to be happy, *will you?*" She then warned them of the vanity of the world, and the danger of riches without religion.

The entire family now surrounding her bed, she broke out in rapturous exclamations concerning those who had died before. "O pa, how thankful we should be. Not one of our family has died in whose death we may not hope—a whole family in heaven! O, glorious thought!" Of her unconverted sisters she again spoke in moving accents, saying, "O, how willing Christ is to save them all! But they will not come. O Jesus, help them to be *willing* to come! Shall any of our number be lost? This thought I cannot bear."

To each of the domestics she addressed words of appropriate and affectionate exhortation. To the hired man, who was a Roman Catholic, she said, "James, you have been a

faithful man, but can't go to heaven by works. You must love Jesus. He is your *great High Priest.* I trust you believe in Jesus: he alone can forgive sins. Put your trust in him: we can be saved only by trusting in him."

Thus, while all present supposed she was dying, she continued for an hour and a half longer to talk in a clear, strong voice. She was at length wholly exhausted. Indeed, it seemed that nothing less than supernatural strength could have sustained her. For days previous she had not been able to converse at all, except in a tone of voice a little above a whisper.

Afterward, as she lay silent, surrounded by her friends, she frequently said, "Do not think I am not happy because I do not speak. I am happy. Jesus is so precious!" During this period of special triumph she was several times greatly tempted, but immediately conquered "by the blood of the Lamb." She continued in the same happy frame until the family retired.

The very day succeeding this "baptism into God"—as she always solemnly described it—the was sorely assaulted by the tempter, even as Christ was driven from Jordan, where the

Spirit sat as a dove upon him, into the wilderness. Under this temptation, which continued many hours, her faith did not fail. She continued to exclaim, "Jesus will deliver me—I know he will. I will *cling to him*—I *will* trust—yes, *I will trust in him*," and words of like import. In the midst of it her father repeated, "He will never leave thee nor forsake thee," and added,

> "'O for this love let rocks and hills
> Their lasting silence break,'" etc.

"Repeat it," said the sufferer. He did so, and for the time the cruel tempter fled; and when her faith had conquered by the Holy Spirit, she began to exclaim, "Now he blesses me again. I feel it through every nerve. Christ ever lives to intercede. I am safe. Omnipotence is pledged. I did not doubt but my Savior would deliver. Grace—saved by *grace!* O wondrous love! Praise the Lord, O my soul! He saves—he saves *to the uttermost.* When the tempter comes in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord lifts up a standard against him. Jesus is my shield—my hiding-place. O what expressive terms—*shield—hiding-place!*"

I had left her some weeks before, under a promise that, if notified, I would return, and,

if possible, be with her at the closing scene. Receiving the anticipated call, I arrived at her father's toward evening, December 2. When I approached her bed, with a smile of affection she threw her arms around me, and kissing me again and again, as often repeated, "I am so glad you are come." She then said, "The Lord has greatly blessed me," and was proceeding to give particulars, when her strength failed. She remarked, "This little excitement prostrates me. I shall have more strength, and will then tell you."

That night she slept little, but was kept in perfect peace, except occasional fiery darts from the enemy.

On Sabbath afternoon, December 3, she again appeared to be dying. She faintly whispered, "Now he again saves," with many other expressions of triumph. But reviving again, fresh assaults of the powers of darkness almost overwhelmed her. During the evening two of her sisters in Christ concluded to retire and plead in her behalf the precious promise, "Where two of you agree as touching any thing ye ask, it shall be done for you"—a promise which one of these sisters had been used to plead in company with the sufferer.

They did so, and had confidence that the God of Israel heard. Returning to the sick-room, Mrs. S—— said, "I have experienced deliverance." It proved to be a permanent deliverance. When, a few days after, she was asked respecting her temptations, she said, "I have had none worth mentioning since Sabbath night." Thus her last spiritual conflict was past. It appears to be common for saints to pass through a similar struggle just before entering their rest. So did their Lord. "This," said he, "is your hour and the power of darkness."

We were now in hourly expectation of her departure, and were often ready to inquire, with her, "Why do his chariot wheels delay?" But, as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are the ways of the Lord higher than our ways, and his thoughts higher than our thoughts. Feeble as she was, and dying, one might say, while she accomplished it, she had yet a work to do. Perhaps we might rather say, she had to *finish* her work.

Mrs. S—— had long labored and prayed for the conversion of her dear sisters; and for one year, at least, she had also cherished an ardent desire for the entire sanctification of her beloved

father. Now that she had come almost to commune face to face with her Savior, as a man with his friend, she presented these objects of her affectionate solicitude before him with a faith which it seemed could not "ask in vain." The sequel shows how fully her labors were honored of the Lord.

*December* 5.—About noon, being alone with her husband, she said, "Be a faithful laborer in the vineyard of the Lord. Let it be your sole business. Have but one business." During the conversation he repeated to her the following lines:

> "'When I see thee as thou art,
> I'll praise thee as I ought.'"

She exclaimed, "O yes—glorious prospect—that such an unworthy sinner as I am should see Jesus! To see Jesus in his glorified humanity, in which he redeemed me—is not that glorious? that I, a *sinner*, may see him, and be received to himself? Thy grace is sufficient. Glory—glory be to God! Jesus—Jesus!" After reading several hymns, Mr. S—— asked if he should read any more. "Yes," she replied, "if there is any thing more about Jesus."

Those hymns that speak of Jesus, especially of his dying love, were her favorites. She had

been accustomed to read and sing them in her secret devotions, and now they were especially precious to her. Some of her selections were those commencing as follows:

"Thou Shepherd of Israel and mine."
"And can it be that I should gain?"
"O, love Divine, what hast thou done?"

After several stanzas had been repeated, she again exclaimed, "O, such a glorious prospect! But not because I am worthy—no! no! no!" Then faintly repeated,

"'And can it be, thou heavenly King,
That thou shouldst *me to glory bring?*'"

Mr. S—— said, "I feel more than ever like living to glorify my Savior." She replied, "Keep your eye fixed there. Don't be ambitious to have your brethren think highly of you. Be humble and devoted."

Toward evening, as Mr. H—— sat by her side, she began to repeat, "A sinner saved by grace—how wonderful!" He said, "We cannot pity you, except on account of your sufferings. We would rather envy you, if it were proper to envy." She answered, "I would not suffer less, if it is my heavenly Father's will. I would not exchange places with any human

being." Then again she repeated, what seemed a spontaneous and irrepressible sentiment with her, "Saved by grace! O, how glorious! A sinner saved by grace!"

On one occasion, after lying silent a considerable time, she said, "I have been trying to get strength to tell you that I think I did right to have that sketch of my experience published last year." "Did you ever doubt it?" I inquired. "Yes." "You do not now doubt that you experienced the blessing of perfect love?" "No," she replied, "I think it must have been that." "But you suffered loss by yielding to doubts?" "Yes," said she, "and by unfaithfulness."

From this time her habitual language was in strains like this: "Jesus is precious—O, for strength to praise him!" "Praise him aloud all you that can!" "If I had a voice, I would praise so that all the world might hear."

On the 7th we were again called in, as we thought, to see her depart. Her pale, collapsed features beamed with joy. "Don't weep," she faintly articulated; "there is no fear. Come, Lord Jesus, if it please thee; but thy will be done!" Reviving a little, she smiled, and said, "I thought I was almost over. I asked him to

take me, if he pleased; but his will be done, whatever it is."

On the morning of the 8th she said, "I am here yet;" repeating, "O that I had strength to praise Jesus! He is very precious this morning."

On the 9th she said, "I am very happy this morning. The name of Jesus is worth a universe!" That night, being extremely low, she said, "I feel that I rest in Christ, just like an infant in the arms of its mother." A little after, becoming restless, and suffering much, she said, "It is a pity if I can't suffer a little, when He has redeemed me." At another time, when suffering greatly, she repeated, in a slow, measured tone, "Thy will be done!"

Sabbath, the 10th, as I approached her bed at an early hour, she said, "Jesus is precious! I have not got my reckoning yet this morning; but this I know, he is precious!" In a few moments she added, "O, how precious is the name of Jesus! This is enough for me. Is not this enough for me to go to heaven with? I have nothing else; but this is enough. I have never exacted a promise from my sisters to seek religion *now*. I think I *will*, this morning. They can never have a better time; they will

be shut out from the world by their mourning habits." I said, "Should you live, would you not feel great interest in urging the Church to seek holiness?" "Yes," said she, "it should be all my business. I should feel it a great privilege, I *think*, but don't know how faithful I should be." I said, inquiringly, "I suppose you have never doubted your entire sanctification, since you received that heavenly influence at Brownsville?" "No," she replied, "I think there has been nothing in my way since." "But you had to walk by faith?" I added. "Yes," she answered, with great earnestness, "for six weeks I had scarcely a gleam of joy; but I had God's word, and in that I had confidence. The very day before that baptism, I told brother Trimble, that if I had not such confidence in the word of God I should be dismayed, because I had not more joy. The next day the Savior came. I have no means of purifying my heart but by faith." She was referred to the text, "And he put no difference between them and us, purifying their hearts by faith." "Yes," she again repeated, "we have no means of purifying our hearts but by faith."

Mr. Sears now coming in, she said to him, "Is

not the name of Jesus enough to go to heaven with?" He replied, "Yes, my dear—enough for a world of sinners." She said, "It would be delightful to go to heaven to-day. O, what love! Why cannot sinners see the love of God?"

This was truly a memorable day—a day to be mentioned in the annals of eternity. Before its close, the youngest sister of the dying saint, with her husband—now Rev. J. M. L——, who, within the last twelve months, has passed from the bar to the pulpit—had entered into a covenant to seek the Lord. When this was told to Mrs. S——, she seemed scarcely able to endure the swelling joy of her own heart. "It will not stop here," she feebly whispered. The following day her brother-in-law, who had determined to put his purpose into immediate execution, was marvelously converted in his law-office, and returned rejoicing in Christ. Filled with wonder, he often repeated, "What a power there is in faith! I could never have conceived of what I experience. It is wonderful, indeed!" Mrs. Sears desired to see him. Upon his entering her room, and approaching her bed, she said, with joy beaming in her eye, "I greet you as a

*two-fold* brother. We were born that we might be religious." Mr. L—— said, "I want you to pray for me." "Yes," said she, "I *have* prayed for you ever since you were united to Bithia;" and added other expressions of affectionate counsel, and of praise to God.

The following day she was told that Mrs. L——, her sister, was earnestly seeking religion, and, it was hoped, would soon find the Savior. She responded, "I have felt such a travail of soul for her since yesterday, that I can hardly live." Being encouraged that her prayer would be answered, she said, "Had I a voice, I would shout so loud that all the world could hear! Praise the Lord with a loud voice all that can!"

That day she desired to receive the sacrament of the Lord's supper again, and that Mr. L—— might partake it with her. While the preparations were being made, and the new convert was endeavoring to prepare his mind for the solemn service, a sound of joy and gladness was heard in the chamber of Mrs. L——, and it was announced that Bithia was also rejoicing in Christ. That same evening their names were given in for probation in the Church, and both joined the family and a few

friends in commemorating the dying sorrows of the Redeemer, with their sister, who was so soon to sing in paradise, "Thou wast slain and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood."

After the close of the sacrament, Mr. and Mrs. L—— approached the bed of their beloved sister. Holy rapture kindled up her emaciated face, as they exchanged the warm salutations of Christian fraternal love. She exhorted them to be faithful, and be willing to be any thing for Christ. "I rejoice," she added, "that one has been won to Christ; yes, two—but you two are now one in the Lord." With great assurance she repeated, "This blessed work will not stop here."

December 13th she lay in the same rejoicing state—seemed to think of every friend, and to feel a prayerful interest for all; and, feeble as she was, and scarcely able to articulate at all, she sent messages to several friends abroad. "Tell sister T——," she said, "that she will have grace to die with, when she comes to die. She used to say in class that she feared she should not. Give my love to her, and tell her I am almost at rest."

"Tell brother T——, from me, to be faithful. Tell him that 'without holiness no man shall

see the Lord.' I would love to say many things, but am unable. Love to every one that asks."

Some time after I was by her bed, speaking of the necessity that I should leave the city on the following day. She said, "There is something more to be done in me, or I should not thus be detained here." I replied, "You are probably detained *to do*, and not to *have* done *for* you:" adding, "I have feared you would be assaulted by that temptation. You may have more yet to do for your Savior before you depart." The pang was but momentary, and her face again lighted up with joy. "You must go," she said. She had several times expressed a desire that she might depart before we were compelled to leave for Marietta, where Mr. H—— had an engagement, and that he might perform the funeral service; but she always added, "The will of the Lord be done." The thought of leaving her was to me too painful to be concealed. She observed my emotion, and looked earnestly, and almost chidingly, at me. To excuse my involuntary tears, and relieve her, I said, "When we meet in heaven we shall have a long and loud song to sing," to which she assented, and then broke out

in praise. Summoning all her powers, she exclaimed, "Why should I not employ all my strength now to praise the Lord? I will praise him;" which she continued to do until quite exhausted. That afternoon she had another season of praise, proclaiming, with all her strength, the mercy of her Savior.

But it is vain to attempt to repeat all her sayings, however interesting and instructive they might be. We have only set down a few passages of each day's edifying conversation, as held by one on the verge of heaven, and speaking as from eternity.

Her most common exclamation—repeated *often*, every day and night—was, "Jesus is precious; O for strength to praise him!" But her countenance and manner always expressed what language cannot; so that the just effect must be lost in placing her words on paper. The following note from Rev. J. M. Trimble, who visited her, will interest the reader:

"During my first visit to sister Sears, after her severe illness, the topic of conversation was the work wrought in her heart by the Spirit of God. She said, 'O, what a miracle of mercy I am! What an exceeding amount of mercy has been shown to me—to one so timid, so

often troubled with doubts—that I should be brought to enjoy this blessed fullness of peace and love in my heart! O, the wondrous love of the Savior! When I was willing to give him my whole heart, my entire sacrifice, he received and blessed me with such a full assurance of his love! Now, my brother, I live by faith—every moment, by faith. I feel Jesus precious to my soul.'

"At my second visit, I commented, in her hearing, on several verses of Rev. vii, xiv, xv. During my remarks she was evidently blessed. After prayer I approached her bedside, and asked if she was in the same happy frame as when we parted, at my first visit. She replied, 'Sweet peace; but not so much joy. The enemy has set sore at me, but my Savior has not let him harm me.' I asked, 'Is the love of God present in the soul?' 'O yes, I do love the Savior, and I know he loves me. I feel he is my refuge and hiding-place, and he will keep me unto eternal life. There is nothing frightful in the valley. Jesus will be with me there, bless his holy name! My all is given up to him, and he will keep all in peace and safety.'"

On Thursday, the 14th, early in the morning, we took our leave. She was perfectly com-

posed, and her last words were, "We'll soon meet in heaven." The following notice of after occurrences was furnished by members of the family:

That day she lay as usual, enduring great pain; but she displayed so much fortitude and resignation, that it was not easy to understand what her real amount of suffering was. At one time she said, "O Jesus, if it be thy will, let the pitcher break, and the silver cord be loosed; yet not my will, but thine be done!"

A pious sister perceiving that there was moisture upon her like the damps of death, gave her to understand that the end was probably near. Her countenance lighted up with joy, and she said, "Is it so? I fear not. O, I would rejoice had the time come. My dear sister, pray for me, that I may have patience—perfect patience."

On the 15th sister F—— said to her, "How precious it is to have Jesus with you now!" "O yes," she replied, "it is worth a universe. Glory!"

That night she said, "Now turn me over. I don't expect to sleep much, but I want to be as full of Jesus' presence as I can."

Saturday, 16th, early in the morning, she

said, "Jesus! Jesus! Praise him! O praise him!" Being asked, "Are you very happy?" she replied, "Comfortable; but I ought to praise him, whether I feel happy or not." A little after, "Precious Savior! Precious—precious—precious! He is *my* Savior. O praise him!"

Observing that, after an ineffectual effort to place her in a comfortable position, her husband wept, she said, "My dear, don't weep. This pain will only make heaven the sweeter."

Afterward she was told that her feet were cold, and could not be warmed. She lifted up her eyes, and exclaimed, "Home! home!" To her father, who now approached the bed, she said, "O pa, be holy. You have been so good to me! I thank you for all your kindness." To her mother, "O ma, how precious is my Savior! Praise the Lord!"

About ten o'clock her second sister, Mrs. Maccracken, who had all the morning sought the Lord in the solitude of her chamber, found him, to the joy of her heart, and hastened to tell her dying sister what he had done for her soul. Her father says, "With a face beaming with heavenly radiance, a tongue eloquent with praise, and eyes bathed in tears of rapture, she

threw her arms around her mother, who was standing by the bed, and—referring to the aversion she had felt to such frequent religious devotions as had been held in the family—exclaimed, 'O ma, I have felt hard toward you; but it is all gone now—all gone for ever. Jesus hath pardoned my sins; now we can praise him together.' Then turning to her dying sister, she said, 'O Angeline, how happy I am! Jesus hath pardoned all my sins! I had only to believe—just to believe in Jesus. How simple is faith! I wonder I had not seen the way before. Why, it is only to believe and live.'"

Mrs. Leavitt, who had from the Tuesday before been proving its efficacy, responded, "'By grace are ye saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God.' We have not to get the grace ourselves; God gives it—*gives it.* We will praise him; we will believe."

Mrs. S——, whose heart heaved with bursting emotions, said, "I have had strong faith for Eliza since last Sabbath. I have believed that I should live till I saw her converted. Glory!"

Pausing a moment, with a transporting gaze first in the beaming face of her sister, and then in that of her husband, who was also standing

by, she exclaimed, "O, is not that rapture? This is the happiest day of my life." Then turning to Eliza, "O Eliza, is not this peace? Now one more—O, one more!" alluding to her eldest sister, Mrs. Gould, who now seemed much affected. The expression, "O, one more," pierced *her* heart. She sought her chamber, and spent much of the day in prayer. Mrs. S—— was asked if she would be willing to suffer a little longer, to see her other sister converted. She answered, "O yes; I think I shall live to see it." Earnest prayer for the conversion of this beloved sister employed her *last hours*. Nor did she pray in vain.

Just before noon she said, "This is very much like heaven. I have a pledge that C—— will be brought in:" adding, "To-day, or to-night at most, I shall get home, and meet a mother, brother, and sister, and soon, I hope, all, *all*. O that I had strength to praise!" Her father said, "You will soon enter into an *eternity* of praise." "Yes," she replied, "I am almost home; do you not see it?" He answered, "I see you are dying." She responded, "Glory! glory! O pa, be holy!"

Toward evening her voice, sight, and hearing failed, and she was in great pain; and it

was difficult to distinguish between her groans and her efforts to praise. For a few minutes her mind wandered, and her eye became wild. Her father repeated,

> "'Jesus, the name that charms our fears;
> Jesus, the name high over all.'"

It soothed her. The wandering of her mind ceased. He then requested her mother to sing. She did so. Mrs. S—— attempted to join, but only now and then a word could be understood. She was now grappling with the king of terrors, but he had lost his sting. Reviving a little, she said, "To-morrow is Sabbath, and I shall worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness."

About eight or nine o'clock she desired the family to retire—said she wished to sleep; and repeated to them, "Good-night, good-night."

At eleven o'clock they were summoned to witness the closing scene. Mrs. G—— desired that her dying sister might be informed that she also had received peace in believing. When this was announced to Mrs. Sears, she seemed to summon all the enfeebled energies of her nature, as if to enlist them in one last effort to praise. Among her expressions could be distinctly heard, "Glory, glory, glory! Praise the Lord!" Her limbs had become cold and

motionless; and she was told that she was now indeed dying. Again she exclaimed, and repeated over and over, "Glory, glory, glory!" Listening attentively, she was again heard to say, "Farewell pa, farewell ma," addressing each by name. Bithia, her youngest sister, not recognizing her own name, was grieved, and said, "You forget me." "No, no," she replied, "all, all. Farewell all!"

About one o'clock she was speechless; but her husband desired her, if she still recognized him, to give him a token. She instantly gave it. "You have often told us," said he, "that Jesus is precious, and now that you can no longer speak, if he is still precious, move your finger." She did so several times at intervals. From one to three she dozed, without much apparent pain, and then, with a single gasp, ceased to breathe.

The following Tuesday, her remains were carried to the Ninth-street Methodist Episcopal church, where a sermon was preached by Rev. J. M. Trimble, presiding elder of the district to which her husband belonged.

## CHAPTER XVI.

**Qualifications as a minister's wife—Self-sacrifice—Love of itinerancy—Regard for those engaged in it—Adaptation to it—Prudence—Discernment of character—Example—Maternal fidelity—Domestic virtues.**

The following chapter is the substance of a communication from Mr. Sears, in reply to my request that he would sketch, at length, the character of Mrs. Sears, as the wife of an itinerant minister. The representation is quite within the limits of sober truth, and not in the character of flattering eulogy, although prepared under the embarrassments referred to in the commencement:

"Dear Sister Hamline,—Reasonable as is your request, I almost shrink from the undertaking. Strange as it may seem, I have experienced a great reluctance in giving myself to this work. I fear my own partialities—I fear that my admiration of the character of her of whom I can never think but with feelings of religious complacency, deeply mingled with sadness, may betray some weakness, which will injure the cause I would promote. I would pen such things only as the deceased at this moment, looking down from heaven, would ap-

prove—such as she would be willing should go forth to the world, not to exalt herself, but the power of that grace that wrought so wonderfully in her heart. As Christ was uppermost in her affections while living and dying, so whatever may appear in the following sketch, worthy of pious approval and imitation, must be mentioned only in honor of that Jesus, of whom, with her dying lips, she discoursed so sweetly.

"The first part of your request has respect to her *character as the wife of an itinerant minister*.

"As few, compared with the many, are either qualified or called to be ministers of the Gospel, so the number of those who may make them suitable companions, is equally limited. Of these few, some might make acceptable wives to settled pastors, who could hardly fill that station in the itinerant life. Indeed, so peculiar are the responsibilities and duties incident to this relation, that there may be greater danger of deficiency on the part of the wife than the husband. To fill that position with acceptability and usefulness, requires a combination of natural and acquired graces.

"In reference to her of whom you make in-

quiry, I may say, in all candor, she seemed to me qualified for the work in which she was engaged. She was, indeed, a helpmate in the Gospel—a true yoke-fellow; and a consciousness of having performed all my duties in our common work, as faithfully as she discharged hers, would fill me with peculiar satisfaction. She did not consent to enter this field of Christian effort without careful consideration. In this, as in all other matters, she acted from convictions of duty, founded upon an enlightened judgment. Her opportunities for forming correct opinions, as to the sacrifices and trials of the itinerancy, were abundant. Her father's house had been a home for the embassadors of Christ for many years. Nothing gave her more pleasure than to listen to their pious instructions, and administer to their comfort. Not a few who may read these pages will remember the cordiality with which she greeted their coming, and the attention she so cheerfully bestowed to render their stay agreeable. From them she had often heard the recital of toils and sacrifices, gladly endured in the cause of their Master. Much she learned from observation. For many years before her marriage, being intimate in most of the preachers' families in

Cincinnati, and familiar with their privations, she had learned to sympathize with them in their sacrifices, and gladly administered to them in the hour of sickness. With some she had spent weeks, and thus had ample opportunity of knowing what was before her, when called to move in the same sphere.

"It was my happiness to form her acquaintance in the autumn of 1841. Finding, like others, a home in her father's family, I had an opportunity to judge of her qualifications for the work in which I was about to engage. My proposal of marriage she deliberately and carefully considered. After several seasons of fasting and prayer, with her parents' consent, she agreed to be a co-worker in the Lord's vineyard. That was an important era in her history. Conscious of the responsibilities and duties of her new relation—not ignorant that hers would be a life of toil and sacrifice—she summoned up all her energies for the work to which she was so fully committed. Though she had entered upon it voluntarily, and understandingly, yet, from her naturally retiring disposition, and the constantly humble views she entertained of herself, there were periods of painful misgiving lest she might fail to carry

out the holy purposes of her calling. But I hasten to notice some of those attributes which gave special prominency to her character as the wife of a Methodist itinerant.

"As fundamental, she had a *spirit of self-sacrifice.* It became an essential part of her religion. It was imbibed as elemental in the morning of her Christian career. It formed a part of her daily discipline. Long before she left the paternal roof, she accustomed herself to a life of self-denial. For months she would abstain from many pleasant articles of food, that she might increase her contributions to benevolent objects. This, however, was a small item compared with what was before her. She had kind friends, whose affections were wont to centre upon her with peculiar fondness. Her every want was supplied with unsolicited hands. No concern for the present or anticipations for the future need trace an anxious line upon her countenance. Her associations were attractive, and her advantages for intellectual and moral improvement abundant. But when duty called, all these she counted loss for Christ. She left the home of her youth, with its comforts, and consecrated by the cherished memories of the past, to be the companion of one, who, from

the very nature of his calling, was compelled to say, with the apostle, 'Until the present hour I have no *certain dwelling-place.*' She forsook her numerous friends, and exchanged abundance for a bare support, to find a transitory home among strangers, amid the vicissitudes of an itinerant life. To thus go forth in the face of certain trials and privations, required no little fortitude in the setting out, and patience in the detail. But she was undaunted in her course, knowing that self-denial lies at the very threshold of all vital godliness, and that 'through much tribulation we must enter into the kingdom of God.' Her feelings in this new relation may be gathered from an entry in her journal on the day of her marriage. It was made on the evening of our first day's journey from Cincinnati to the eastern states:

"'This departure is under new and untried circumstances, with new hopes and new prospects opening before me, with new joys filling the soul, and new fears, causing the heart to tremble. While I think of the great responsibilities that the connection I have just formed causes to rest upon me, I am ready to cry out, "Who is sufficient for these things?" O that I may be driven continually to my blessed Savior

for all I want—that, through Christ strengthening me, I may be able to do all my duty to my God, my husband, and fellow-beings!'

"Her first and last years were periods of no ordinary trial. But she endured all without a murmur—yea, with the greatest cheerfulness.

"The last place where she shared with me the special trials of the itinerancy was in the valley of the Scioto. We found the place fixed for our residence was extremely unhealthy. The ague and fever prevailed to an unprecedented extent. But two or three individuals in the entire village had escaped. Our house was small, and the range of Christian associations very limited. Weeks passed before a single individual called to exhibit the expected marks of hospitality. In a short time Mrs. S—— was attacked with the bilious fever, which soon yielded to the prompt administration of medicine. I anticipated the probable result of a protracted exposure, to one naturally so delicate, in so miasmatic a region. I urged her to return to her father's, till the sickly season should pass. My repeated solicitations could not secure her assent. She would reply, 'I am your wife—the wife of an itinerant minister; and do you suppose I can desert my post, and leave you here, subject

to the very disease I would escape, without any kind hand to administer to your wants? As long as you stay, I will stay.' She would not even suffer me to give her friends a full account of her situation, lest her father should insist on her removal.

"Second. She *loved the itinerancy.* She loved it because she believed it truly apostolical, and eminently adapted to carry out the demand of the great commission. She loved the work, not because it offered any hopes of a life of ease and pleasure; not because she believed she had any special adaptation for its duties; but because, in the providence of God, being the wife of an itinerant minister, she saw in it the embodiment of her heavenly Father's will; and henceforth it became her chief desire to do and suffer that will. It was with her a matter of religious principle, never to falter in a good cause, or shrink from positive duty. Hence no complaint ever escaped her lips in view of a hard appointment. She looked with abhorrence upon any thing like management to obtain consideration with the appointing powers, often remarking, that she would rather endure the privations and sacrifices incident to the most laborious circuit, than suffer the humiliating

reflection, that aspiring and distrustful feelings had induced her to become a party in a scheme of successful favoritism. She had great confidence in the wisdom and integrity of our superintendents, and believed that all things would work together for good to those who put their trust in God.

"She went to each new appointment with cheerful submission, prepared to encounter all unexpected trials. So great was her affection for this work, that all private interests and pleasures were made subservient to it. Though her social attachments were strong, yet, when duty called me from home, I never discovered the least unwillingness on her part to be left alone. Even when her diseased state would seem to require my personal attentions, she would say, 'Go, my husband, and labor faithfully for the Lord. What is the Lord's will is my pleasure. Stay just as long as the nature of your work demands.' A brief extract from one of her letters will show her feelings on this point: 'Though I am necessarily deprived of much of your society, which is dearer to me than all the world, yet I resolved, before our marriage, that *my claims* should never conflict with the calls of the Gospel. Hence, any other

absence, on your part or mine, even for the purpose of visiting my dearest friends, *is a great sacrifice* to me.'

"Most faithfully did she adhere to that resolution. Though oftentimes I left her with the unbidden tear upon her cheek, yet it was with her smiles and her blessing. It would be no marvel if sometimes my reflections were sad, when contemplating her situation, as compared with her former situation in life, knowing her feeble state of health, and the sensibilities of her nature. That she suffered much in her feelings, when thus left alone, I have no doubt; but no trace of sadness was discernible. A consciousness of being in the path of duty afforded her more pleasure than the most favorable outward circumstances. When away to spend a few days with her friends, her heart was with her husband. The comforts and endearments of her youthful home were an inadequate compensation for the pains of separation from my work. Our humble cottage, in the midst of the active duties of our calling, was the most welcome place to her. Out of regard to her, in part, I sometimes expressed a wish to become a teacher in some of our institutions of learning. Such proposals she always met with a

prompt negative, and generally with this reply: 'I married you as a Methodist minister; and though a change of situation would afford me many social privileges and home comforts, yet I am unwilling you should ever leave the regular work, till you are convinced your call has expired. Never shall it be said that I diverted you from the regular work.'

"She loved the itinerancy because she highly esteemed all who were engaged in its duties, both the preachers and their families. For ministerial character and usefulness she indulged a constant solicitude. The office and duties were sacred in her eyes. Any thing that detracted from the dignity of this sacred profession, or embarrassed the minister himself, was a source of grief. Any thing like trifling in common intercourse, or humorous witticisms in the pulpit, met her reprehension. Her advice was made a great blessing to me. A few words from a familiar letter will show her solicitude on this subject: 'Take good care of *your whole self*. Let us use few and well-chosen words—walk circumspectly. Be diligent in business, *alias* study, which is the best advice a wife no better than yours can give.' Again, writing to me at conference, she inquires:

'What kind of a session are you having? I pray often, daily, that every member may be baptized afresh for his work, and that all may be engaged about it *now*, remembering that they are entertained by and associated with immortal souls, the purchase of that Savior's blood, whose Gospel they profess to have a commission to preach. "And what of their wives?" say you. Well, they too, I know—I *feel*—need a constant baptism, and *I more than they all.*'

"Her views of ministerial character were very strict. She considered the work so important and peculiar, that it should never be trammeled by secular and unholy alliances. She looked with distrust upon the benevolent associations that required ministers of the Gospel to affiliate in fraternal and familiar converse with ungodly men. In this she held strictly to the doctrine of Wesley, as taught in his sermon on 'Coming out from the world.' Her sentiments were expressed freely in her correspondence. The following is an example:

"'I think that the work of the *ministry* should *entirely* employ the preachers of the Gospel. Professor Upham, in his "Interior Life," has a chapter on *curiosity*, which might

profit our young men who profess to be groaning after full redemption, in these days of novelties. I want you to be a man of one work—that of a humble, old-fashioned preacher, content with the old Wesleyan paths, and whose energies all centre in saving souls, by bringing them to Christ; not in seeking after the popular novelties of the day. And I would, my dear husband, that I were worthy to aid you in this work. I never felt a more ardent desire for a consecration to and fitness for it. I have felt a great confidence in prayer for you, since you left, that your labors for the few ensuing weeks may be blessed. Indeed, my only place of comfort in your absence is that hallowed spot where last we bowed together. There I daily commend you, our little son, and myself to the care of our heavenly Father.'

"Third. *She possessed a thorough adaptation to the work in which she was engaged.* She did not limit her intercourse to the wealthy and intelligent. It was her settled principle never to neglect the poor. If either, from circumstances, must lack attention, it was her rule to pass by others, and find her way to the lowly cottage, knowing that there her visits would be

appreciated, and probably be more profitable. With unembarrassed familiarity she would search out all the temporal and spiritual wants of its inmates. The lessons she learned while a manager of the Female Benevolent Society, afforded her much practical and useful knowledge. A little incident occurred on the before-mentioned journey, just after our marriage, which no doubt led her to bestow special attention on the more neglected portions of our people. She thus noted it: 'Found brother H—— awaiting our coming. Amongst much other good advice, he said, "Sister Sears, do not forget the poor; *they* especially will prize your visits:" a subject I had thought much of. Observation had taught me that, from some cause, the poor of the Church were less visited than those in more affluent circumstances.' That the advice was duly heeded, may be seen from the fact that, in one instance, a censorious person made the remark, that Mrs. S—— visited the poor more than the rich, *because they made so much of her.*

"Another important qualification was her prudence. And where is it more needed than in the practical duties of such a life? It made her circumspect in all her intercourse, at home

and abroad. A thoughtless expression seldom fell from her lips; and many were the instances in which she gave me a timely caution, when, in the frankness of my nature, I was about to express myself more freely than I ought. As to evil speaking and idle gossip, she had a great aversion to them. She saw that not a little mischief may be caused in the Church by the imprudent remarks of ministers' wives. She knew that their 'words eat, as doth a canker.'

"She was careful that the entire labors of her husband should not be counteracted by the occasional imprudences and indiscretions of his wife. I must say that I have yet to learn the first remark she ever made, whose repetition would be attended with injurious results to any individual, or would be prejudicial to her own Christian character, or the cause of Christ. In this, it is not too much to say she was a *model.*

"*She possessed a discernment of character* that often saved me from embarrassment. This I found to be of great utility. It was our lot to form new acquaintances every year. In visiting a new field of labor, the preacher and his family are liable to be imposed upon by unworthy persons, who take that opportunity to secure attention, when a more intimate acquaint-

ance would restrain their familiarity. It is my nature to speak with too much freedom to strangers; and, but for her affectionate hints to caution me, I might have been involved in difficulty.

"*She was a safe counselor*, which is certainly important in a minister's wife. There are times in the history of every minister, when difficulties thicken, and dangers threaten—when the weak will despair, and the most courageous and experienced be deeply solicitous, if not confounded. The case may be such as to preclude consultation with his brethren. At such a time, how gladly does he turn to a pious and judicious wife, and receive from her hints which aid and strengthen him! What a blessing it is for a husband to be befriended in such an hour! I experienced both the exigency and the relief. Mrs. S——'s judgment was generally correct.

"All matters connected with the discipline of the Church, and the general interests of Zion, as well as the more ordinary concerns of life, became matters of free consultation between us. How many trying questions have been settled, while in familiar converse with her by the fireside!

"Who can set a proper estimate upon such

a companion? Her worth may be *felt*, as I now feel it, when often, in need of advice, the desolate heart goes forth in vain for that comfort and counsel which I was wont to receive. I will add, I scarcely ever followed her suggestions without profit; and seldom dissented, but with subsequent regret.

"She was a *faithful*, and, as far as her strength admitted, an *efficient co-worker* in the special duties of my calling. Here she experienced two hinderances. Her constitution was delicate, and she was seldom exempt from some indisposition. At times she suffered much, but it was in silence. Any ordinary affection could be known only by close observation. A hereditary predisposition to pulmonary disease rendered her incapable of much exposure; this, attended occasionally with general debility, forbade protracted physical exertion. In the matter of her own health, she did not seem to exercise her usual prudence. By the sick-bed of a friend, she would tax her strength with prodigality; but when needing attention herself, she was reluctant to express her wants. Another hinderance was her modesty. I would not intimate that this is prejudicial, except

where it is excessive. Over *her*, I have reason to believe, it exerted an inordinate control. She studiously avoided all that was assuming in manner; and such was her deference for age, that she would seldom consent to lead the devotions of a female prayer meeting in the presence of older ladies, not duly considering her own experience, and her relation to the Church. She felt a great shrinking from any thing like display; yet she so far overcame her diffidence as to render herself useful in pastoral visitation, in the Sabbath school, and in laboring with penitents at the altar.

"During the first year of our itinerant life, being free from domestic care, she visited with me almost every family in my charge, scattered over a wide extent of country, which gave her an enduring place in the affections of that people. This was her general practice at each new appointment, whenever her health and circumstances would permit. In it she took a pleasure, because she very properly considered it a part of her duty.

"In the Sabbath school she rendered efficient service. When the school was so distant as to preclude her attendance, she taught a Bible class

at home. In this department of the work she had much experience, being accustomed to its duties from childhood.

"With the penitent at the altar she gladly labored. She needed no urging to engage her in this delightful work. Feeling that she was solemnly pledged to it, she offered her services, though sometimes with trembling, to point the sinner to the Lamb of God. Her most extensive labors in this direction were in connection with my first appointment; and it is worthy of observation, that the last act of her public labors was to pray for a weeping sinner, and instruct her in the way to Jesus.

"During an extensive revival in Vienna, N. Y., she took an active part. She not only instructed the mourner, but frequently led the devotions in prayer. To pray in a promiscuous congregation, though it never conflicted with her views of propriety, often caused her to tremble under the cross. When at home, she would sometimes ask to be excused from such public performances, which I deemed for her good, and a profitable example to others. She never refused, however, in public or in private, to speak or pray when called upon. She had too much respect for the cause she had so

ardently espoused to decline a positive, and, especially, a public duty.

"I may say, lastly, on this topic, *she was, in every respect, an example to the flock of Christ.* Her piety was fervent and uniform. Every one who made her acquaintance perceived its influence. Her conversation was such as to administer instruction. In idle words and evil speaking she never indulged. No one could take license from her to become a busy-body. But there was one particular in which she exerted a very happy influence, and one where some, in a like relation, do harm. She was conscientious and exemplary in dress—a pattern of Christian propriety, carefully avoiding the extremes on either hand. A weak conscience she would not wound, nor fall into the extravagant customs of the age.

"She recommended the religion she professed, not only by word and action, but by her apparel. She scrupulously avoided every thing that she feared might offend. The pulpit was thus left untrammeled; and any remarks I might make upon dress were never counteracted by the example of a wife attired in all the superfluities which I deemed it my duty to reprove in others.

"Thus I have given you an imperfect sketch of her character as the wife of an itinerant minister. Though she often felt herself unfit for the work, and in secret wept over her inaptitude, yet, in view of her feebleness of body and her retiring disposition, it may be doubted whether many can be found who have more fully met the diversified and difficult requirements of her position. I leave this part of the subject with two remarks. I have not made this sketch as religious as I would have done, had not the matter of her personal experience been committed to other hands. To a person unacquainted with Mrs. S——, some expressions used may appear extravagant, especially coming from one so liable to over estimate her character. Yet if any thing appear exaggerated, I doubt if it will be from a real disagreement with facts.

"In answer to your second inquiry, I reply: Mrs. S—— sustained an interesting character, not only in the Church, but also in her domestic relations, as a *wife*, a mother, and the *mistress of a family*.

"As a wife, she was amiable, confiding, and devoted, to the just limits of creature attachment. It was her constant aim to make home

happy. Her amiableness did not consist in the mere absence of unlovely qualities—a kind of domestic *harmlessness*—but in attributes which shine out so as to constitute an engaging expression of excellences, whose value can be appreciated by him alone who has experienced the influence of their attraction. She loved all that was lovely in her family, and what lacked, she assiduously sought to render *worthy* of her love. She was very *confiding*.

"She cast herself, with all her interests, and in all the glowing, sanctified impulses of her nature, into the sanctuary of her friends' hearts. No conscious or conceited superiority rendered her distrustful. It was her highest earthly happiness to have a kindred spirit, with whom she might freely hold converse, and to whom she might go for advice and consolation. Her sound judgment was felt, not only in the circles of society, but within the peaceful precincts of domestic life.

"Naturally strong affection may exist with very limited mental cultivation, and conduce much to the happiness of the family; but how much more elevated and complete are its enjoyments when united with a gifted and well-disciplined mind! The evening dew may be

refreshing to the parched earth and pining flowers, nourishing them even amid the shades of night; but how much more beautiful are its pearly drops sparkling in the early beams of morning! Nothing can give a greater charm to the family circle, than intelligence mingled with piety. Both were blended in Mrs. S——, so as to afford me, in an elevated sense of the expression, 'a feast of reason and a flow of soul.'

"Her domestic attachments were strong. This helped her cheerfully to exchange the comforts and associations of her father's home, for the changeful allotments of an itinerant life. When once committed to this work, no expression of dissatisfaction ever escaped her lips. Indeed, the humblest abode that ever sheltered us, and the last where we enjoyed the precious privileges of our own fireside, was often referred to by her as a place where memory loved to linger, and with which were connected some of the most delightful associations of her life's history. This feeling was ever manifested, by the spirit of contentment she exhibited, the reluctance with which she would separate herself for a time from its duties and pleasures, and the great solicitude she

manifested when absent to return. A separation from her own family was attended with a degree of regret, which often caused her to say, 'I think this is the last time I will ever leave home without you.' I might dwell on this theme; for with it are associated the cherished memories of a heart that has experienced the priceless value of the most endearing private relations.

"Her maternal example gave evidence of that same discretion and fidelity which marked her duties in other relations. Her views of family government were Scriptural. Though her affection for our only child was ardent, yet it seldom gained an undue ascendency over her judgment.

"In domestic government the conflict was often severe, and painful even to tears; yet, true love so prevailed, that timely correction was, I think, never withheld. This she believed was necessary when her child was of tender age, convinced that no indulgence should be given to the vicious propensities of children. She had no fellowship with that blind maternal devotion, which allows the child to go uncorrected until indiscreet indulgence nourishes vicious habits, which no after discipline can

eradicate, attended with the weak excuse that the child is too young to be chastised.

"Well do I remember her first trial with her little son, when but a few months old. Strong was the conflict between affection and her sense of duty. Intense solicitude marked her features, which ere long manifested itself in tears. Confident that here was an adjustment of moral destiny solemn beyond description, and that this one issue might exert an all-controlling influence upon the future character of her child, she persevered till her aim was consummated in the subjection of his will. That effort, though painfully protracted, saved her in after days many hours of unpleasant solicitude.

"Another instance of affectionate regard and true maternal solicitude, was exhibited in the provision she made for the education of her little son. I gave to Mrs. S—— all my perquisites. These she appropriated in paying for a scholarship in the Ohio Wesleyan University. Had she lived another year, the last payment would have been made, and five years' tuition secured; or twenty-five years, according to the new basis of scholarships.

"It now remains only that I speak of her as the *mistress of a family.* I thought her a

worthy example of the Christian housewife. Four things were noticeable in her domestic habits; namely, *neatness*, *industry*, *economy*, and *fidelity*. That motto of Mr. Wesley was often upon her lips, 'Cleanliness is next to godliness.' Her house conformed to her personal appearance. A limited acquaintance would assure even a stranger that she 'looked well to the ways of her household.' 'A place for every thing, and every thing in its place,' made our humble cottage a pleasant abode.

"To see a lady dressed in bad taste, her house devoid of order, and especially to find a parsonage disfigured and injured by mischievous children, filled her with regret; and the more so, because she considered that a minister's wife should be an example in all things, and, as Mr. Wesley says, 'a pattern of cleanliness.' In answer to a complaint that 'the preachers' wives spoil our houses,' this great man replied, 'Let none that have spoiled *one* ever have another;' a prohibition that would have been harmless in her case. Her table, to be sure, was never loaded with luxuries; yet the simple necessaries of life were so prepared and served up, as to answer every end of domestic comfort.

"*She was industrious.* Time never hung heavily upon her hands. Deeply impressed with the brevity of human life, and its responsible duties, each moment was filled up with some useful employment. She carefully divided her hours to various occupations, not spending time in study that ought to be yielded to her family; nor, on the other hand, so 'cumbered with much serving' as to neglect her mind and the various means of grace.

"She was a keeper at home, prepared to do all its duties, yet ready and willing when called to mingle with the people. She was far from despising labor. Though always embarrassed with poor health, yet, when circumstances required, with her own hands she administered to the wants of her family. The duties of the kitchen were never left undone for the want of help, nor were garments made by other hands which she could make herself, unless it might be to furnish employment for the *truly* destitute. Though she had not been a stranger to those circles where labor is carefully avoided, and much time is trifled away in vain pursuits, she was not afflicted with that *refinement* which turns pale at the bare dread of manual exertion, and is shocked with the idea of descending

to the vulgar offices of domestic life. She was convinced that industry was but another word for being 'diligent in business' and 'redeeming the time.'

She was *economical,* and could make a little go a great way. She studied this, not only as an *art,* but as a *duty* and a real accomplishment. There was nothing in her, however, like parsimony. No necessary of life was covetously dispensed with. It was a settled policy to meet real wants with as small an expenditure as possible—not to lay up treasure on earth, but that her husband might not be embarrassed with debt, and, if possible, to have something at the end of the year for the benevolent enterprises of the day. How well she succeeded in these things, her yearly contributions to the Bible and missionary causes will declare. She adhered closely to the Scripture precept, 'Owe no man any thing,' often saying, 'I would sooner live upon the bare necessaries of life, than leave an appointment in debt.'

"Though our 'allowance' was often very small, yet, by her prudent management, our liabilities were met, and we enjoyed the comforts of life and the pleasures of benevolence

in some degree. She studied to '*get* all she could, *save* all she could, and *give* all she could.' Religion made her feel that she was a steward, and should be faithful in *little* as well as in *much*.

"She was *faithful* in all her domestic relations. The heart of her husband could safely trust in her. When absent, he had no solicitude in reference to the issue of matters at home, having the most implicit confidence in her superintendence. When alone, the regular hours of devotion were observed. Though her irreligious friends were present, she never shrunk from the cross of family prayer, heavy as it was.

"She was punctual in discharging the obligations of friendship. No heart was ever more alive to its claims. She never made an intimate acquaintance but she secured a friend; and that friend, once secured, was never alienated. She was herself a true, a tried friend. Her promises were inviolable. Matters of a secret character committed to her confidence she never divulged. If made known to her family, it was through other channels, which served to heighten their admiration of her discretion and fidelity.

"But I have already made these observations too lengthy. I will close by saying: I would have every thing good and praiseworthy

in her character set down to the credit of the grace of God. Let it be mentioned only in honor of her *Savior;* for few were ever more sensible than she was of utter unworthiness; and none, I think, could adopt, with more sincere humility, the sentiment of the poet,

'Our good is all divine.'

"Most affectionately, yours,

"CLINTON W. SEARS."

I repeat, that this sketch is quite within the limits of sober truth. Nay, more might be said in presenting the sum of those excellences and graces which rendered our departed friend exceedingly lovely in life and in death. But let us look beyond those feeble reflections of the Divine glory which rendered one of God's sanctified children comely in our eyes, to the source whence she received those graces, and strive, as she did, for all the mind that was in Christ. Do we not see that in these memoirs we have a powerful vindication of the truth of Christianity? Is not religion arrayed before us by the life and death here sketched, in a form which moves the heart greatly to covet it? As its benefits are here illustrated, do we see nothing in it desirable for *youth,* for *womanhood,* for *life,* for *sickness,* for *death?*

May the writer and the reader be versed in this religion as an *experimental verity*, and not merely as a doctrinal speculation! Like her, of whom we read and write, may we consecrate all to God! Like her, too, may we believe—"*trust!*" And like her—O, grant it, thou God of infinite mercy!—may we be able to exclaim, in the hour of our dissolution, "The name of Jesus is enough for me"—"*the name of Jesus is worth a universe!*"

THE END.